THE END OF THE *SEVEN AGAINST THEBES*

The essential purpose of the present article (which is quarried from my Cambridge doctoral dissertation, 'A Study of the *Seven against Thebes* of Aeschylus', 1975) is to put forward a new theory concerning the last scene of the *Septem*, 1005–78. The problem of the play's ending as a whole has been very thoroughly discussed by P. Nicolaus, *Die Frage nach der Echtheit der Schlussszene von Aischylos' Sieben gegen Theben* (Tübingen, 1967); since I have no wish to duplicate Nicolaus's work I shall deal only very briefly with those aspects of the problem on which I find myself in agreement with him and with other scholars.[1]

The anapaests 861–874

The view of most scholars, that these lines are spurious and that the lyrics which follow (875–960) were written by Aeschylus[2] for the chorus and not for Antigone and Ismene, seems to me to be clearly right. I shall confine myself to summarizing the main arguments as I see them.

1. The style of 861–74 is intolerably bad, as Nicolaus, in particular, shows in detail (pp. 15 ff.). It is evident, indeed, that Lloyd-Jones (pp. 100 ff.), in defending the lines, has the greatest difficulty in finding parallels for many of the expressions.[3] But perhaps it is the subjective impression which the whole passage consistently gives of sheer bad writing that must in the end count for most; even if Aeschylus could have been guilty of 863–5 *or* 871–2, could he possibly have been guilty of *both* expressions only half a dozen lines apart?

2. The entrance of the sisters interrupts the chorus just as it is about to begin a lament (854–60). The chorus appears to resent this, for, having announced its foreboding that they will 'send a lament not ambiguously from their lovely deep-breasted chests', it firmly forestalls them from doing so (866 ff.).[4] Believers in the sisters now find themselves in a cleft stick. If they give the whole ode 875–960 to the chorus (so e.g. Lloyd-Jones, p. 105), then the silence

[1] The following are the articles on the end of the *Septem* to which I shall be referring (normally by author's name only): U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, 'Drei Schlussscenen griechischer Dramen', *Sitz. der Berl. Akad.* 1903, 436 ff.; M. Wundt, 'Die Schlussscene der Sieben gegen Theben', *Philol.* 65 (1906), 357 ff.; A. Platt, 'The Last Scene of the *Seven Against Thebes*', *CR* 26 (1912), 141 ff.; R. Kohl, 'Zum Schluss von Aischylos Sieben gegen Theben', *Philol.* 76 (1920), 208 ff.; S.C. Manginas, 'ἡ γνησιότης τοῦ τελευταίου μέρους τῶν 'Επτὰ ἐπὶ Θήβας τοῦ Αἰσχύλου', *Athena* 57 (1953), 305 ff.; W. Pötscher, 'Zum Schluss der Sieben gegen Theben', *Eranos* 56 (1958), 140 ff.; H. Lloyd-Jones, 'The End of the *Seven against Thebes*', *CQ* N.S. 9 (1959), 80 ff.; E. Fraenkel, 'Zum Schluss der Sieben gegen Theben', *MH* 21 (1964), 58 ff.; R.D. Dawe, 'The End of the *Seven against Thebes*', *CQ* N.S. 17 (1967), 16 ff.; H. Petersmann, 'Zum Schluss von Aischylos' Sieben gegen Theben', *Ziva Antika* 22 (1972), 25 ff. For fuller bibliography see Lloyd-Jones and Nicolaus.

[2] Page, in the apparatus of his 1972 O.C.T., implies that 875–960 might also be spurious. But the style of these lines seems wholly Aeschylean, and on Page's own showing, since they contain nothing 'quod sororibus unice conveniat', they can hardly be by the same interpolator as 861–74.

[3] The fact of which Manginas and Pötscher make so much, that some expressions here do have close parallels in genuine Aeschylus, proves nothing.

[4] The text here can be emended to give some other meaning, but this does not affect the real problem.

of the sisters is incredible. O. Taplin (*HSCP* 76 (1972), 84 ff.) convincingly shows the difference between a meaningful 'Aeschylean silence' and such pointless hanging about. If, on the other hand, parts of the ode are to be given to the sisters (so e.g. Murray in his O.C.T.[2] (1955)), then the more they have to sing, the more Page's words will become operative: 'vix credibile videtur. . .nihil inesse quod sororibus unice conveniat'. In short, the sisters are introduced at this point either to take a quite unnecessary part in a lament belonging to the chorus or to do nothing at all.[5]

3. The original play was designed for two actors, the interpolated ending for three.[6] Defenders of the ending as it stands are forced to assume either that the deuteragonist is instantaneously transformed from Ismene (who is not even given a reason to exit) to the Herald (Lloyd-Jones, pp. 95 f., considers this possible) or that the part of Ismene is sung by a παραχορήγημα (so e.g. Wundt, T.G. Tucker, *The Seven Against Thebes of Aeschylus* (Cambridge, 1908), pp. 5 f.); clearly neither alternative is remotely attractive.[7]

The Lyric Stichomythia

Those who would banish the sisters are divided on the authenticity of 961–1004. I believe that Wilamowitz, Fraenkel, and Nicolaus (pp. 33 ff.) are right to defend the lines. Page agrees with Lloyd-Jones that they must have been written for the sisters, 'his enim unice congrui sunt 996–7'; but in that case it seems peculiar that 996–7 should be the *only* lines of which this is true.[8]

996–7 must then be bracketed, as Wilamowitz recommends in his edition;[9] and there is no difficulty about this. Lloyd-Jones's discussion (pp. 107 f.) is in fact once again too honest for his own purpose. He demonstrates that 995 should be scanned as two cretics (reading δώμασω) rather than a single dochmiac (reading δώμασι), and divided between singers; and this means that the two dochmiacs which follow, even if not unsuitable to their metrical context, can easily be dispensed with. Fraenkel shows that τὸ πρόσω γ' is linguistically peculiar and πρὸ πάντων unusual, and suggests that the interpolator wanted to insert into these lyrics something that would be suitable only for the sisters but

[5] I take it, however, despite Wilamowitz (app. crit. of his *Aeschyli Tragoediae* (Berlin, 1914)) and Taplin, that the interpolator did intend to give the ode, or parts of it, to the sisters. The reason he introduced them as early as 861 will have been so that they could lend variety and subjective pathos to the lyrics at a time when a purely choral section of such length would have been intolerable to an audience.

[6] This particular argument would be met by the compromise solution of Kohl, who accepts Antigone but rejects Ismene, or that of C. Robert, *Oidipus* (Berlin, 1915), i. 375, and Pötscher, who accept the sisters in the lyric section but reject the final scene. For reasons which will be apparent neither of these compromises seems to me acceptable.

[7] The children's songs at Eur. *Alc.* 393 ff., *Andr.* 504 ff., presumably performed by actual boy singers, are clearly not comparable. Some have supposed that Ismene's few words at Soph. *O.C.* 1724–36 were sung by a supernumerary, but even if this were true the procedure would remain highly improbable for Aeschylus sixty years earlier (see Dawe, p. 22).

[8] Mention of the sisters at 974 is no doubt the result of mere scribal corruption, as Wilamowitz says.

[9] Several editors (and Wilamowitz in 'Drei Schlussscenen') follow Haupt in keeping 995 undivided, deleting 996 and retaining 997. This solution does give the required symmetry, but it does not suffice to make the lines suitable for the semichoruses. On the other hand there is no need to delete 995 as well as 996 f., with S. Srebrny, *Critica et Exegetica in Aeschylum* (Toruń, 1950), 34 ff.

was not competent to make the insertion except at a place where he did not have to bother about responsion.

And surely the rigidly formalized ritual lament of which 961–1004 consist is the last thing that would be composed by the kind of late-fifth-century or fourth-century interpolator who was responsible for the sisters. The end of the *Persae*, the oldest surviving tragedy, provides the closest parallel for both the form (strict antiphonal alternation of very short phrases) and the content. The dirges in both these plays dwell obsessively on a single tragic fact; those in Sophocles and Euripides explore more subjectively and pathetically the circumstances and emotions involved, especially the grief of the survivors (indeed it is only 996 f. that approach this sort of pathos here). To compare e.g. Eur. *Tro.* 1287–1332, perhaps the closest parallel in later tragedy, is at once to become aware of the difference.

I suspect that one reason why many scholars have wished to remove the lyric stichomythia is that it is difficult to separate neatly from the final scene. When once the lines are given to the semi-choruses, the way in which each semi-chorus mourns one brother anticipates the final anapaests. And 1002–4 form an excellent cue for the entry of the Herald. But this brings us to further problems.

The Final Scene

Now that we have eliminated the sisters from the rest of the play, Antigone obviously cannot suddenly turn up here, unnamed and unannounced. Nor should we wish her to do so; there is no need to rehearse yet again the arguments against ending a trilogy with what clearly ought to be the first chapter in a new episode of Theban legend.

Nevertheless I wish to consider the scene in more detail. As far as I know, it has invariably been assumed that if Antigone is to go the whole scene must go. But the Herald in his initial speech never mentions her or shows any awareness of her presence; nor, except for one line (1064), does the chorus.[10] May we not, then, take it as a hypothesis that the Herald's speech and the closing anapaests (except for 1064) were written by Aeschylus?

First we must take a closer look at 1064. Would it be arbitrary to tamper with this line? I think not. We are told that Polynices will be ἄγοος and receive only the θρῆνος of a sister. But adjectives formed from α στερητικόν and a noun stem normally express *complete* absence of a thing; and the chorus can hardly be intending to make a distinction between γόοι and a θρῆνος.[11] Thus 1064 seems to contradict 1063; and even if the expression is not wholly impossible, at any rate in the work of an interpolator, it is sufficiently peculiar to suggest that we may be on the right track.

Aeschylus will then have followed 1063 with a line (or more than one) which described Polynices' future fate in terms obviously incompatible with a decision

[10] At 1068 συνθάψομεν has naturally been taken to mean 'help Antigone to bury'. But it need not. The semi-chorus has just referred in the masculine to τοὺς κλαίοντας Πολυνείκη, the implication being that other citizens besides the chorus are having to make a decision in the matter and that some may defy the edict; the context thus makes it natural in any case to talk of 'taking part in the burial'.

[11] The different words for lamentation are discussed by M. Alexiou, *The Ritual Lament in the Greek Tradition* (Cambridge, 1974), pp. 102 f., 225 f. None of the distinctions of meaning that she draws can be relevant in the present context.

by Antigone to bury him.[12] The interpolator of 1026–53 (or a later producer or editor) noticed the inconsistency and removed the line. But sense and synaphea then demanded that something else should be substituted – hence our 1064.

We may now consider arguments for and against our hypothesis.

Reasons for retaining the Herald's speech and the anapaests

1. Antigone declares that she will bury Polynices herself ἢν μή τις ἄλλος τόνδε συνθάπτειν θέλῃι (1027). But she is not reckoning with the possibility that she will have helpers; she is assuming that she will not. Her whole speech, presumably under the influence of Sophocles' *Antigone*, lays the strongest emphasis on her heroism in performing the burial *alone*. Are we to suppose that the writer of this speech deliberately chose to destroy this effect and defy the expectations of both Antigone and the audience by subsequently providing a whole semi-chorus of helpers?[13] Interpolators may not be very bright, but their behaviour is presumably governed by mental processes of *some* kind.

2. At 1055 f. we are told that the Erinyes have utterly destroyed the family of Oedipus. It is scarcely conceivable that these lines were written by someone who was aware of the existence of the sisters.[14] If the Herald had got round to threatening Antigone with execution, the chorus might possibly be allowed to anticipate this event; but he has not, and anyway Ismene would still be unaccounted for.

3. The anapaests begin with an emotional outburst which, it turns out (1058 f.), is prompted not by Antigone's behaviour but by the fact that the chorus has been forbidden to mourn for Polynices or escort him to his tomb.[15] The outburst would therefore most naturally follow immediately after the prohibition.[16]

4. Wundt and others ask why, if the scene was modelled on the *Antigone*, the burial of Polynices is here forbidden by a Herald and not by Creon. Doubtless Wundt gives too much weight to this, as to other discrepancies with Sophocles' version, for the interpolator was not obliged to conform to his model in every particular, and might have wished to show a little independence.[17] Still, there is a minor difficulty here, and one which my theory neatly removes.

[12] A plausible guess would be that ἄγοος was followed by a term meaning 'unburied' in a paraphrase of the Homeric ἄκλαυτος ἄθαπτος; cf. 1022 f., 1058 f. The sense of εἶσιν will perhaps have been completed by 'to Hades' or the like: e.g. χωρὶς τύμβου παρὰ τοὺς φθιμένους.

[13] The point has been made before by Wilamowitz, *Aischylos: Interpretationen* (Berlin, 1914), pp. 89 f., and others, but the natural conclusion – that Antigone's speech and the anapaests are by different authors – has not been drawn.

[14] Once again the inconsistency has been noted (see e.g. Dawe, p. 21) and the point has then been left hanging.

[15] I am here assuming, with all recent editors, that 1054–65 belong to the whole chorus. Attempts to give anything before 1066 to semi-choruses run into difficulties, since 1062–5, which favour Polynices, will presumably have to be delivered by the same semi-chorus as 1066–71. Lloyd-Jones's attempt (pp. 111 f.) to distinguish between whole semi-choruses and their leaders is highly conjectural.

[16] Sometimes in tragedy a choral ode commenting on the action will take its point of departure from somewhere earlier than the end of the preceding episode. It would be more surprising if an anapaestic system which itself contributes to the action could do the same.

[17] I do not suppose there will be much support for Petersmann's view that the interpolator's references to the city in general, in

5. I hesitate to mention style at this point, since the material is so limited and since the Herald's speech and the anapaests have, as we shall see, attracted their share of stylistic objections. But it will perhaps be admitted that all the *worst* stylistic features in the scene do occur in the passage 1026–53 — the very peculiar rhetoric of 1033 f., for instance, and the insoluble problem of what Antigone intends to carry in her bosom at 1039 (on which see especially Dawe's article). Platt, who considered the whole scene spurious, found Antigone's speech particularly 'Sophoclean' and drew most of his stylistic objections from it. This stylistic point would prove nothing by itself, but will serve, if admitted, to reinforce the four preceding points.

(These five arguments, taken together, strongly suggest that 1026–53 are by a later hand than the rest of the scene, but they would in themselves be compatible with Dawe's suggestion that more than one interpolator might have been at work. We must now consider whether there are reasons for identifying the earlier 'interpolator' with Aeschylus.)

6. We have already seen that the preceding lyric stichomythia, which appears to be genuine, neatly foreshadows both the Herald's speech and the anapaests. Note too the visual symmetry that continues from the entrance of the bodies to the end when once the sisters are removed. The bodies, we may suppose, are placed on either side of the orchestra, surrounded by attendants and by the two semi-choruses (who may come together when they have to sing in unison); the Herald, with or without the δήμου πρόβουλοι (see below), enters and leaves through the skene, if a skene with a door existed at this date, and in any case speaks from a central position; and the semi-choruses finally file out with the bodies by the two parodoi.

7. Some account of the burial of the princes, beyond the brief hints in 914 and 1002 f., would be very welcome, as Lloyd-Jones points out (p. 93).[18] Eteocles was a great king and the defender of his city, and the audience would be as interested in his fate after death as in that of Agamemnon or Sophocles' Ajax. As for Polynices, the question whether he is to be equally honoured is one that the play as a whole automatically raises, for in the central scene his wickedness was contrasted with the virtue of Eteocles, whereas throughout the last part of the play both brothers were mourned alike as victims of the Curse. The final scene now takes account of this ambivalence and to some extent resolves it. It is also worth remembering that Pindar, Sophocles, Euripides, and Theban tradition as reported by Pausanias all took particular interest in the funerals that followed the expedition of the Seven, as indeed did Aeschylus himself (*Eleusinioi*); presumably this reflects the concerns of the *Thebais*.

And there is another motif from earlier in the play which is developed in this scene, for this is not the first time that the chorus has been forbidden by a representative of the interests of the state to indulge its natural religious instinct for cries and lamentation; 1023 will recall such lines as 280. I hope to argue elsewhere that a major theme of the play is the conflict between an intuitive and emotional religious attitude, consistently displayed by the chorus, and a clear-

place of Creon, can be explained by anti-Theban sentiment after the Battle of Delium in 424. For one thing one would hardly expect anti-Theban sentiment at Athens to be directed against the δῆμος.

[18] Of course if the interpolated scene replaced an extended ending by Aeschylus, as some have thought (Wilamowitz, 'Drei Schlussscenen', D.L. Page, *Actor's Interpolations in Greek Tragedy* (Oxford, 1934), p. 32), then the latter could also have taken account of the burials. But then it could have looked remarkably like the ending which my theory postulates.

sighted and pragmatic one, consistently displayed by Eteocles; the present scene, then, though it does not resolve this conflict, once again alludes to it.[19]

8. Let us now look at the closing anapaests. Dawe seems impressed by their style; C.M. Dawson, *The Seven Against Thebes by Aeschylus* (Englewood Cliffs, 1970), pp. 25, 123 f., evidently would like to retain them but cannot see how; W. Schadewaldt, *Griechisches Theater* (Frankfurt, 1964), p. 88, and his pupil Nicolaus, p. 83, in fact suggest that some of them (1054–6, 1068–70, 1072, 1074–8) are derived from an anapaestic passage written by Aeschylus to follow 1004.[20] We must at once concede, however, that in mere style a clever interpolator might well manage a convincing imitation of Aeschylus. What seems to me far less likely is that an interpolator would choose to imitate from other plays Aeschylean or archaic features of stagecraft and (for want of a better term) 'chorus psychology' that Aeschylus himself had (*ex hypothesi*) left out of the *Septem*. One can always say that the interpolator is deliberately archaizing, but there must come a point where this ceases to convince, for the purpose of his work was (*ex hypothesi*) to *modernize*.

Firstly and most obviously, the *Septem* as we have it ends, like the *Choephoroe* but like no surviving post-Aeschylean tragedy, with a choral anapaestic system of some length and of great dramatic interest. Indeed in our manuscripts all post-Aeschylean tragedies end with a very brief and conventional choral tag, except for Soph. *O.T.* (which may originally have had one) and perhaps *Trach.* (if the last lines there belong to Hyllus); and if in any instance we consider that tag spurious, we shall be left with an ending delivered by actors (or with another choral tag in the case of Eur. *I.T.*). Nor does what we know of fourth-century tragedy make it at all likely that the chorus at that period regained a more important role in the exodos.

Secondly, the chorus make it clear that they are exiting in some sort of procession (*αἴδε προπομποί*, 1069), which no doubt provides an excuse for some grand choreographic pageantry. This feature can be paralleled from *Persae* (*πέμψω*, 1077) and more especially *Eumenides* (*τῶνδε προπομπῶν*, 1006; *πομπᾶι*, 1034), but not from any surviving post-Aeschylean tragedy. (If the chorus's exit in *Ajax*, for instance, is to be regarded as a funeral procession, at any rate the chorus themselves make no allusion to this.)

A parallel can also be drawn with the *Supplices*, which like the *Septem* ends with a disagreement between two bodies of people. If, as some scholars have thought,[21] the disagreement there is between two semi-choruses, the parallel becomes very striking; it will still be of some significance if a subsidiary chorus is introduced, as is usually supposed.[22]

Again, the *Septem* as we have it ends with half the chorus suddenly defying authority and displaying unsuspected reserves of courage and loyalty. This is

[19] I am aware that arguments of this kind are subjective and can be made to cut both ways; it is no doubt possible to give an account of the scheme and purpose of the *Septem* that will leave no place for the final scene (see e.g. Nicolaus, pp. 85 ff.). I would maintain, however, that my own account is at least equally good.

[20] Schadewaldt's theory would in fact meet some of my arguments; but the anapaestic passage seems to me perfectly coherent and internally consistent (apart from 1064), and I can therefore see little methodological justification for regarding it as a patchwork by more than one author.

[21] See A.F. Garvie, *Aeschylus' Supplices: Play and Trilogy* (Cambridge, 1969), pp. 194 ff.

[22] Another possibility, which would also favour my case, is that a subsidiary chorus sings 1034–51 but the main chorus divides at 1052.

peculiar, but it is a peculiarity closely paralleled by the behaviour of the whole chorus at the end of *Agamemnon* and *Prometheus.*[23] In all three plays the chorus has earlier seemed timid and feeble; in all three it, or part of it, becomes defiantly loyal to its hero or master at the end. The very oddity of this feature makes it seem unlikely that an interpolator would imitate it.

9. Dawson is right to admire especially the last few lines, 1074–8. This again is a matter of something slightly more than mere style, for it seems that the 'interpolator' has here exploited an existing image-pattern of the *Septem* with as much skill as Aeschylus himself.[24] Again and again in the first part of the play nautical imagery (often underlined by alliteration, as here) was used to express the role of Eteocles as the responsible commander, the general idea being that he was like the helmsman of a ship – the city – threatened by waves (64, 114) of foreign attackers. Of late, however, this aspect of Eteocles has been forgotten and nautical imagery has been used more sparingly and for other purposes. Now in these lines Eteocles is at last given his due as the successful defender of the city, and it is at this point that the nautical imagery returns, used exactly as in the first part of the play, to strike a whole series of chords in the minds of the audience.

10. From a historical point of view my theory works at least as well as any other. Whether or not the *Thebais* made an issue of Polynices' burial, we may reasonably guess that the heroic deed of Antigone was a fifth-century invention, perhaps a Sophoclean one,[25] and that at any rate it was not regarded as a necessary part of the story in Athens in 467. It was therefore as natural and characteristic for Aeschylus to dramatize the burial issue in a scene between a Herald and the chorus (for such a scene cf. *Supp.* 872 ff.) as it was for Sophocles to make it a conflict between a heroic Antigone and a tyrannical Creon. After the *Antigone,* and perhaps the *Phoenissae,* had become popular, however, the last scene of the *Septem* began to seem very much like Hamlet without the Prince; so when the play was revived it was felt necessary to insert Antigone into the scene. And the interpolator then decided that he might as well introduce both sisters at an earlier stage (861 ff.) to take part in the lyrics.

Possible objections

1. When 1026–53 are removed we are left with a passage of only 21 iambic trimeters. But there is an even shorter iambic passage at *Cho.* 838–854 (17 lines, separated by choral anapaests from the scene that follows), and there are complete 'episodes' almost as short at *Pers.* 598–622 (25 lines forming a single rhesis), *Sept.* 792–821 (29?), *Supp.* 600–24 (25). Nor had Aeschylus any reason to pad the scene out further; events here are, no doubt, fast moving, but no more so than at the end of *Supplices* or *Choephoroe,* and, if we think of the burial theme more as a means of rounding off the play than as a separate issue of it, there is no reason why events should *not* be fast moving.

(The remaining points are ones that have been raised in the past against the scene as a whole.)

[23] The parallel with the *Prometheus* is noted by B. Snell, *Aischylos und das Handeln im Drama, Philol. Suppl.* 20.1 (1928), 94. I am assuming, more for the sake of argument than from conviction, that this play is by Aeschylus; if it is not, my argument must be adjusted accordingly.

[24] Of the various discussions of the nautical imagery in this play the best is that of D. van Nes, *Die maritime Bildersprache bei Aischylos* (Groningen, 1963), pp. 75 ff. and *passim.*

[25] So e.g. G. Müller, *Sophokles: Antigone* (Heidelberg, 1967), pp. 21 ff.

2. A new issue is raised at the end of the play. But I hope I have shown that the issue is an important and relevant one; and the scene is no more loosely attached than, for instance, the Aegisthus scene of the *Agamemnon,* which similarly breaks in unexpectedly after the main action of the play is over and after a long series of lyrics. Much has been gained, of course, by the elimination of Antigone; the scene now genuinely reads like a finale and not like the opening of a new story.

3. Loose ends are left hanging. Or are they? The audience will have no doubt, when it sees the bodies carried off accompanied by mourners, that the burials will in fact take place. The authorities know nothing of the matter, for the Herald, instead of standing about making feeble remarks like 1053, has exited briskly after 1025 (a much more suitable exit line than 1053, incidentally). Admittedly 1066 f. hint at unpleasant consequences for one semi-chorus, but Aeschylus always seems indifferent to the fate of his choruses after the play is over; he leaves the chorus of *Agamemnon* dangerously defying Aegisthus, that of *Choephoroe* without a ruler, and that of *Prometheus* sharing Prometheus's plunge into the depths.

4. Wilamowitz, *Aisch. Int.*, pp. 88 ff., and many others object that the scene contradicts an assumption made elsewhere in the play that both brothers will be laid in the same grave. Lloyd-Jones, p. 96, replies that a shared grave may still be intended in the final anapaests. But Lloyd-Jones is surely wrong; the two processions apparently exit in different directions (note 1072, *ἅμα τῶιδ'*, sc. *ἴμεν*), and when an audience sees people moving in different directions it assumes that they have different destinations.

On the other hand the notion that a shared grave has previously been foreshadowed does deserve examination. It seems to have been questioned only by Manginas, not all of whose arguments are well formulated. But it would be surprising if it were true, for it does not appear from D.C. Kurtz and J. Boardman, *Greek Burial Customs* (London, 1971), that family graves were at all usual in Greece at any time after the Bronze Age; and in Attica of the classical period, they tell us (p. 97), 'pit graves were single burials, as were virtually all other graves. The few examples of mass burials were the result of extreme circumstances. . .'.

To return to the text: in such lines as 731 ff., 818 (Page's 820), 906 f., all that is said, as Manginas points out, is that the brothers will inherit only enough land for their graves.[26] The analogy which Wilamowitz and others imagine they have seen between dividing a kingdom and sharing a *common* grave is nowhere drawn by Aeschylus.

At 914 in an obscure context[27] occur the words *τάφων πατρώιων λαχαί*

[26] These prophecies would indeed be incompatible with casting Polynices out unburied; but that is not what happens. Presumably we are not to exclude from Greek tragedy every development that *threatens* to prevent the fulfilment of a prophecy?

[27] Page is probably right to imply that in 912 *σιδαροπλήκτους δέ τοι* is the best that can be done; and I sympathise with his inability to swallow the frigid and misplaced rhetoric of *τάχ' ἄν τις εἴποι, τίνες;* (as 913 is usually punctuated), though I am not sure what alternative there is. But 914 looks sound enough in itself. *λαχή*, though paralleled in a third century Boeotian inscription (*SEG* 3. 357. 2), is here doubtless an Aeschylean coinage formed from *λαγχάνω* on the analogy of e.g. *λαβή* from *λαμβάνω* (cf. *πευθώ* at 370, *ἄϋπη* at 713, *μελλώ* at *Ag.* 1356). Certainly the word is not connected with *λαχαίνω* as the schol. and some commentators think.

They have been taken to mean 'shares in their father's grave'; but why not 'shares in the ancestral graves'? It is the ancestors who have hitherto possessed graves; now Eteocles and Polynices are to have their own share. Underlying the expression is an implicit contrast with shares in the ancestral *property*.

And indeed at 1002 the place of burial is still not regarded as settled. But then comes 1004, another line that has been quite arbitrarily treated. It seems to be universally supposed that πῆμα πατρὶ πάρευνον is in apposition to σφε in 1002, so that the brothers are to be buried beside Oedipus with, apparently, the express intention of spiting him – a grotesque and pointless procedure. But the natural ways of taking these words are as exclamatory nominative or, better, as accusative 'in apposition to the sentence', the meaning in either case being simply that the fact of honourable burial given to the sons whom he cursed will be a source of continual pain to the dead Oedipus. πάρευνον is figurative, personifying an abstract πῆμα; cf. *Ag.* 14, φόβος . . . παραστατεῖ, 894, τοῦ ξυνεύδοντος χρόνου, Pind. *Pyth.* 9. 23–5.

Thus the 'shared grave' idea proves, I think, as unsupported by the text as it is intrinsically improbable.

5. Exception has been taken (see e.g. Nicolaus pp. 47 ff.) to the political situation implied by δήμου προβούλοις (1006) and by the scene as a whole. I cannot see much force in this. Lloyd-Jones shows (p. 94) that δήμου προβούλοις is not a technical term for a probouleutic committee but merely means 'those who take counsel on behalf of the people'; this is itself anachronistic, no doubt, but certainly no more so than the βουλή of *Ag.* 884 or the self-consciously constitutional proceedings in the *Supplices*.[28] Since the Theban royal family has died out and Aeschylus does not wish to introduce a named regent – a Creon – at this late stage of the play, it is wholly natural that power should be made to pass into the hands of an anonymous body; and the use of vague terms loosely recalling the politics of his own day enables Aeschylus to avoid going into irrelevant details.

6. Fraenkel (*MH* 18 (1961), 133 ff.) finds the rhythms and syntax of 998–1004 especially characteristic of the ends of tragedies. But the evidence quoted hardly seems sufficient to justify such a conclusion; and similar patterns do occur elsewhere, as Fraenkel himself shows by quoting *Ag.* 410 f. Also the text and metre of *Sept.* 998–1004 are themselves highly uncertain.[29]

Points of style and other details

It now remains to go through 1005–25 and 1054–78 in detail looking for features that could tell against Aeschylean authorship. My lemmata are taken from Page's text; other editions mentioned here are those of A.W. Verrall (London, 1887), T.G. Tucker (Cambridge, 1908), Wilamowitz (Berlin, 1914),

[28] In reply to Lloyd-Jones Dawe claims that 'in *Suppliants* all the power resides with the king Pelasgus'; but even if that were true (and it is far from obvious) it would not alter the crucial fact that anachronistic procedures are alluded to. Nor can I agree with Dawe that the last scene of the *Septem* shows a 'preoccupation with the πόλις as a political entity' any greater than is demanded by the new turn in the plot; and indeed we may remember that the ἀστοί were already credited with minds of their own at 6–8, as was the δῆμος at 198 f.

[29] In fact I believe the antiphonal pattern of the lyric stichomythia should here be sustained with a text on the lines of Weil's Teubner Edition. I am firmly convinced that 999 is spurious (an intrusive gloss unconnected with the other interpolations).

P. Mazon (Paris, 1920), and P. Groeneboom (Groningen, 1938).

1005. *δοκοῦντα καὶ δόξαντ'* As has often been pointed out, the tautologous expression has a formal and legalistic ring appropriate to the context. The same is true of the fullness of expression in the next line.

1006. *τῆσδε* If the *δήμου πρόβουλοι* are present then Wilamowitz's *τοῖσδε* should be accepted, for the audience need to know who these people are. But their presence is not certain, as Lloyd-Jones notes (pp. 94 f.), and the way in which *τῆσδε Καδμείας πόλεως* is echoed by *τῶιδε Καδμείων τέλει* at 1025 tells against Wilamowitz's emendation.

1007. *ἐπ' εὐνοίαι χθονὸς* 'For his goodwill to the land.' Fraenkel, 'Zum Schluss', quotes Lys. 22. 11, Dem. 18. 273; and it can scarcely count as much of an objection that in these parallels the *εὔνοια* is that of the subject of the sentence.

1008. *φίλαις* No doubt basically 'welcome (to Eteocles)', but perhaps with a suggestion that *φιλία* is present on all sides (cf. Tucker and Groeneboom). *φίλης* has its attractions.

κατασκαφαῖς The word always means 'destruction', except here, at 1037 and at Soph. *Ant.* 920. Fraenkel argues on the basis of *Ant.* 774 and 891 f. that the meaning at *Ant.* 920 is not 'graves' but 'a hollowed-out chamber', and claims that the interpolator here, in imitating Sophocles, has failed to understand this. But even if Fraenkel is right about *Ant.* 920 (and 'graves' seems to me an easier translation there in view of *θανόντων*), it would be at least as reasonable (for anyone who believes in this kind of argument) to claim that the present passage, where the word is qualified by *γῆς* and means 'act of digging', is the origin of the extended usage at *Sept.* 1037 and *Ant.* 920, where the word is not so qualified and means 'thing dug'.

1009 ff. Wilamowitz, *Aisch. Int.*, p. 89, advances some rather odd objections to the reasons given for Eteocles' burial; Lloyd-Jones's reply (p. 95) seems quite sufficient. The fact that Eteocles was King is not mentioned because Polynices also claimed kingship, and here as elsewhere in the play Aeschylus wishes to avoid raising the original issue between the brothers (unlike the interpolator at 1049).

Nicolaus, pp. 61 ff., rather more reasonably objects that 1009, in implying that Eteocles sacrificed himself for the good of the city, is inconsistent with what we have seen earlier in the play.[30] If we look closely, however, we shall see that the language is carefully calculated to *suggest* that Eteocles died from patriotic motives while *not* actually falsifying the facts; and that is just what we might expect from a partisan Herald who wants to present Eteocles' death in the most favourable light. To say that Eteocles died 'keeping out the enemy' is, after all, literally true, whatever his motives were; and to say that he 'chose death' is barely, if at all, an exaggeration, given that he went deliberately to the duel in full knowledge that his death would be the result.[31] Similarly in 1011

[30] Many scholars have indeed thought that Eteocles does sacrifice himself for the good of the city; recent revivers of this 'Opfertod theory' are Dawe, *PCPS* 189 (1963), 37 ff., and G.M. Kirkwood, *Phoenix* 23 (1969), 9 ff. I cannot accept it, however; for some good counter-arguments to Dawe's view see F. Ferrari, *Annali della Scuola Norm. Sup. di Pisa* Ser. 3. 2. 1 (1972), 141 ff.

[31] That Eteocles foresees his death in the duel has been denied by H. Patzer, *HSCPh* 63 (1958), 109 ff., and others. They argue on the basis of 672 that he expects to win and that when he talks of his death (684, 689–91, 697, 702–4) he must be referring

the Herald carefully avoids specifying whether Eteocles' death was itself καλός while using language which strongly implies that it was.

1009. στέγων A pretty certain deduction from the manuscript readings στύγων and εἴργων. It is often objected that στέγειν cannot be used of a man, and indeed this would probably not be a normal fifth-century usage;[32] but it is quite intelligible in terms of the imagery of the play, since στέγειν has been used of the walls (216, 234, 797) and the walls have been fortified with men (63, 449, 797 f.). The enemy were like water trying to penetrate a ship; the walls have proved watertight against them; and Eteocles has been part of this 'watertightness'.

ἐν πόλει 'ἐν πόλει nudum omnino intolerabile,' says Wilamowitz (app. crit.); he therefore joins the words with ἱερῶν πατρώιων, omitting δ', but this, as he says himself, could hardly be Aeschylean. One answer to Wilamowitz might be to compare ἐν γᾶι at 567; but in fact I should much prefer to accept Francken's ἐν πύλαις. Without reference to Francken's conjecture Nicolaus, p. 62, quotes Aelian, *Var. Hist.* 3. 25, where Leonidas and his 300 τὸν μαντευόμενον αὐτοῖς θάνατον εἵλοντο ἐν Πύλαις ; and it looks to me very much as though Aelian is in fact quoting Aeschylus's line with a pun on πύλαις / Πύλαις.[33] For the corruption cf. ἀλλη πρὸς πόλει for ἀλλαις ἐν πύλαις in Plato's misquotation of *Sept.* 451 (Pl. *Rep.* 550 c).

1010. For the construction of ἱερῶν πατρώιων (loosely governed by the whole following phrase), and for μομφῆς ἄτερ amplifying ὅσιος, see Tucker.

1014. ἔξω βαλεῖν This detail could not be derived from the *Antigone,* as Wilamowitz points out (*Aisch. Int.*, p. 94). He argues that it must be derived from Eur. *Phoen.* 1630, where the idea is expressed more fully; but the expression here is quite as full as it needs to be, and both lines, as Nicolaus notes (p. 70), allude to a semi-technical legal term.

1015. ἀναστατῆρα A very rare word found only in Aeschylus (*Cho.* 303, cf. ἀναστάτης at *Ag.* 1227) — a small point in favour of authenticity.

1017. τῶι τοῦδ' It is generally assumed that τοῦδ' is Polynices, δορί being governed by ἐμποδών. In that case, however, τῶι τοῦδ' does seem very weak and superfluous, since the whole sentence has been about Polynices and there is thus no need to specify that the spear was his. I prefer the view of Tucker that τοῦδ' is Eteocles and the dative is instrumental (so also Verrall, but with added complications). The enjambment is then effective; a god stood in the way with a spear, but the spear he used was in the hand of Eteocles and not, as we at first imagine, his own.[34]

1017 f. ἄγος. . .κεκτήσεται θεῶν can perhaps be defended on the analogy of ἐναγὴς θεῶν; but Dawe's κεκλήσεται is attractive.[35]

1018. ὅδε Surprisingly enough this redundant ὅδε , misleading us into expecting

to death from the pollution of fratricide. But that is not the most natural way of taking these lines, and it is better that we should attribute Eteocles' apparent confidence at 672 to the rhetorical context and not seek to pin him down to a single consistent set of expectations.

[32] Though W. Headlam, *On Editing Aeschylus* (Cambridge, 1891), p. 95, quotes some late parallels: Polyb. 3. 53. 2, 18. 25. 4, Diod. 11. 32. 4, *A.P.* 9. 304 (Parmenion).

[33] Aelian openly quotes from Aeschylus's work elsewhere: *Hist. An.* 9. 42, 12. 8; fr. 22.

[34] For a phrase in enjambment giving an unexpected twist to the sense cf. *Sept.* 427 f., 531 f. (as compared with 47), *Cho.* 984 f., 988 f.

[35] See Dawe, *The Collation and Investigation of Manuscripts of Aeschylus* (Cambridge, 1964), pp. 182 f.

a change of subject from the preceding clause, has apparently excited no disapproval since Verrall's edition. It seems that the word is in contemptuous opposition to τοῦδ' but has been postponed out of its proper place in the main clause to avoid an over-mechanical antithesis. I have not found an exact parallel.

1020–4. The sentence is slightly irregular; in effect we must understand αὐτῶι with ὁμαρτεῖν, αὐτόν as object of προσσέβειν, and αὐτόν again as subject of εἶναι. But I doubt whether irregularities of this kind can count at all against Aeschylean authorship as long as the sense is clear.

1021. On the word-play here see Lloyd-Jones, p. 109.[36]

1022. ὁμαρτεῖν The thought is of the people who would build the mound, though the actual χειρώματα are then substituted as the subject of the verb.

χειρώματα Not 'slaves' (Tucker) but 'work of hands'. For this meaning Lloyd-Jones, loc. cit., compares ἀχείρωτον at Soph. *O.C.* 698, where, however, the meaning may well be 'unsubdued', as Jebb takes it. At Soph. *O.T.* 560, on the other hand, a 'deadly subduing' makes rather less good sense for θανασίμωι χειρώματι than a 'deadly act of violence, manhandling'. But even if the present usage were an unparalleled catachresis, this would itself be characteristic of Aeschylus.[37]

1023. προσσέβειν The rendering 'honour in addition' does not seem very natural; and it is pointed out to me that if the meaning is simply 'honour' then e.g. προσεύχομαι is not fully comparable, since εὔχομαι πρός τινα is possible Greek while σέβω πρός τινα is not. But προσκυνέω exists without presupposing κυνέω πρός τινα ; and προσθιγγάνω τινός means the same as θιγγάνω τινός where θιγγάνω πρός τινος would be impossible.

1024. ἐκφορᾶς Covering the whole process of mourning and burial; we need not expect strict logic in the use of the word (Nicolaus, pp. 71 f.).

1025. τέλει Since the word commonly means 'judicial office', and since τὰ τέλη are magistrates in Thucydides and elsewhere, the present usage, though not exactly paralleled, is not surprising (cf. Lloyd-Jones, loc. cit.). And *someone* expected an audience to understand it, so why an interpolator rather than Aeschylus?

1056. The prosody of this line, which Page singles out as a sign of late date, requires detailed consideration. It seems true that there is no other instance of lengthening before initial mute and liquid in tragic anapaests (for Aesch. fr. 44 Mette is not one). If, however, it appears that the lengthening was occasionally allowed in other metres, a single instance in anapaests need cause no great surprise.

Barrett on Eur. *Hipp.* 760 shows that there is no *a priori* objection to the lengthening, which is regularly found in epic and in pre-tragic lyric and iambic verse. And it will no doubt be agreed that he is right to admit it in the lyrics of Sophocles and Euripides. From the lyrics of Aesch. only two instances are quoted,[38] *Cho.* 606, τωᾶ πρόνοιαν, and *Eum.* 378, ἐπὶ κνέφας, but these two

[36] I feel, however, that it would have more point if there were a double meaning in τοὐπιτίμιον λαβεῖν – not just 'to pay the penalty' but also sarcastically 'to receive the honour (of burial)' (as some of the older commentators in fact took the phrase). ἐπιτίμια is used of honours paid to the dead according to the manuscripts (usually emended) at Soph. *El.* 915.

[37] On catachresis see J.A. Schuursma, *De poetica uocabulorum abusione apud Aeschylum* (Amsterdam, 1932), Fraenkel on *Ag.* 149.

[38] Corruption is certain in *Pers.* 664 f., probable in *P.V.* 582.

do appear genuine (see also Fraenkel, *Agamemnon* iii, 826 f.).[39]

In dialogue instances are fewer, but some in Eur. are hard to emend away. In Aesch. we have again two, *Pers.* 782, *νέᾱ φρονεῖ*, and fr. 677 M, *ἐφήμερᾱ φρονεῖ*.[40] The latter is in itself quite easy to emend, the former much less so, as Broadhead shows ad loc.;[41] and the similarity of the two is strong evidence that both are genuine. There is also the anonymous Gyges Fragment, col. ii. 5, where the lengthening before initial mute and liquid occurs amid an unusual number of lengthenings before mute and liquid in mid-word; and it is interesting to find Page, *A New Chapter in the History of Greek Tragedy* (Cambridge, 1951), pp. 23 f., 43 f., using this as evidence of an *early* date.

Possibly, then, the two Aeschylean instances and the Gyges Fragment might allow us to guess that the lengthening in dialogue (and so in anapaests?) was especially a feature of very *early* tragedy. In any case, though the prosody of *Sept.* 1056 remains anomalous, it cannot be considered specifically symptomatic of post-Aeschylean authorship.

1061. *δεῖμα πολιτῶν* The citizens are experienced as fear, fearfulness; Tucker cites *inter alia Cho.* 770, *ἄγγελε δεσπότου στύγει*, Eur. *H.F.* 700, *πέρασς δείματα θηρῶν*.

Groeneboom thinks that fear of the citizens suggests a democracy, but such punishments as stoning by the people were traditional enough; we need only compare once more *Sept.* 198 f.

1069. *γενεᾶι* Not, I think, 'by the laws of kinship'; possibly 'to the family' (i.e. both brothers); but probably 'to the race (of Cadmus)' (cf. Eur. *Hipp.* 1462 f.).

1070 f. Several scholars agree with Wilhelm Nestle, CP 5 (1910), 138, that the idea expressed here is sophistic and Sophoclean. But there is a great difference between a common-sense statement that a city's view of justice can alter — a fact of which Solon and Theognis, for instance, were well aware — and a large-scale emphasis on mutability or moral relativism. The originality of Sophocles' thought lies more in new emphases than in previously unheard-of concepts.

1072. *τε* For the misplacement see J.D. Denniston, *The Greek Particles*[2] (Oxford, 1954), pp. 518 f., 588.

1075. *ἤρυξε* On the form see Lloyd-Jones, p. 111.

1078. *τὰ μάλιστα* The words cannot mean 'utterly', so they cannot qualify *κατακλυσθῆναι* as Mazon and others think. To take them with *ἤρυξε* involves considerable hyperbaton, which Wilamowitz regards as a sign of interpolation (app. crit.); but *Eum.* 1025, where *δικαίως* must be taken with *πέμψω* in 1022, is still a more extreme case. And the hyperbaton here has point; we are suddenly brought back at the last minute from the possible destruction of the city to

[39] *Cho.* 606 is admittedly in a corrupt ode, but I cannot believe in the 'incendiary woman' we meet in Page's text; Althaea is being charged with murder, not arson. *πυρδαῆ τινα πρόνοιαν*, as a sinister riddling reference to her plan of burning a brand, is much more appropriate. And *πρόνοιαν* needs an epithet.

At *Eum.* 378 Page accepts the lengthening, presumably as an epic licence in a dactylic context; but we cannot reasonably assume that Aesch. made a distinction in this matter between dactyls and other metres if Sophocles and Euripides did not.

[40] At *Cho.* 854 it is probable, though not certain, that the right reading is Elmsley's *φρέν' ἂν κλέψειεν* and not Heath's *φρένᾱ κλέψει' ἄν* (elision of *-ε* before *ἄν* being very rare in tragedy).

[41] *νέ' ἀφρονεῖ*, which Page prints, will hardly do. Until late Greek *ἀφρονεῖν* is found only at *Il.* 15. 104 — and then as a participle, which, as can be seen from Fraenkel's note on *Ag.* 1174, need not presuppose the existence of the finite verb.

Eteocles' action in saving it, the real concern of the sentence and the thought which Aeschylus wants to leave with us as the play ends.

I think I have now discussed every point in these lines that could cause serious difficulty; parallels to other features are given by the commentators and Manginas. The tally by my reckoning stands at two real anomalies (ὅδε in 1018, the prosody of 1056), neither specifically suggestive of a late date, plus a few cases of strained expression, none particularly unaeschylean. Many, if not most, Aeschylean passages of similar length have as much wrong with them as this.

Conclusion

These matters are never, of course, susceptible of proof, and authenticity is even harder to prove than spuriousness. Nor is there any particular virtue in compromise or in rescuing every possible line; given that interpolation has occurred, a long interpolation is hardly less likely than a short one. I feel, however, that I have provided solid grounds for believing that 1026–53 is later than the rest of the scene; and the authenticity of the rest, even if conflicting evidence can be produced on this, would not, I imagine, have been seriously doubted if 1026–53 had never been written.

Cambridge A.L. BROWN

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Addendum

It is unfortunately only at the last minute that I have been able to see Professor Hartmut Erbse's interesting article 'Zur Exodos der *Sieben* (Aisch. *Sept.* 1005–1078)', *Serta Turyniana* (Urbana, 1974), pp. 169 ff.

The first of the article's two parts consists of replies to linguistic and stylistic charges brought by Nicolaus and Fraenkel against the iambic part of the exodos. On lines 1005–25 Erbse's arguments and mine frequently support or supplement each other, but at some points we are in sharp disagreement; I would suggest that the last part of my article should be read in conjunction with the first part of Erbse's. Of the stylistic merits of 1026–53 I remain sceptical.

Erbse's Part II seeks to show that the themes of the exodos are not alien to the play as a whole. I am hardly an impartial judge, perhaps, but I find in Erbse's arguments confirmation of my own feeling that the burials have indeed a place in the *Septem* but that it takes special pleading to say the same of Antigone.

A.L.B.