

## DIVINE GUILT IN AISCHYLOS

Any attempt to grapple with the issue of divine behaviour towards men in Aischylos or any other Greek thinker must begin with the question of expectations: what do the gods expect from men, and what, if anything, may men expect in return from the gods? A. W. H. Adkins has I think demonstrated clearly that in Homer at least the defining barrier between mortal and immortal is one of degree, not kind; the gods are gods not because of moral excellences or all-encompassing wisdom, but simply by virtue of their greater power.<sup>1</sup> This power, and the capacity to defend it, is the essence of their *τιμή*, which they guard as jealously as any mortal *ἀγαθός*. What is expected of men, therefore, is a healthy respect for divine *τιμή*, and an avoidance of any action, however innocent, which might seem to lessen divine status. Thus when Hermes in the first book of the *Odyssey* tells Aigisthos not to kill Agamemnon or to take his wife, he does so *qua* god, not moral adviser, and Aigisthos' transgression lies foremost in his rejection of that command.<sup>2</sup> In the same way Hesiod's Prometheus offends (several times) against the prerogatives and *τιμή* of Zeus, and is appropriately punished; that he meant well is irrelevant to Hesiod, nor is there any interest in his rehabilitation.<sup>3</sup> Examples in the lyric poets are by the nature of the genre less abundant, but we may certainly note Stesichoros 223 *PMG*, where Tyndareos' accidental slight of Aphrodite draws down the anger of the goddess on his daughters.<sup>4</sup> Similar too is the fate of the daughters of Proitos, whose boast in Bakchylides 11 that their father is wealthier than Hera brings about their subsequent madness.<sup>5</sup>

Turning then to the preserved evidence from Aischylos, we find what appears to be a considerable preoccupation with much this same kind of human-divine relationship. Kassandra breaks her word to Apollo after promising herself to him, and is destroyed for it. Laios disobeys Apollo's recommendation that he remain childless, while the Danaids, like Hippolytos, surely offend Aphrodite by their rejection of the opposite sex.<sup>6</sup> Lykourgos and Pentheus both threaten the *τιμή* of

<sup>1</sup> *Merit and Responsibility* (Oxford, 1960), pp. 62–4, *From the Many to the One* (Ithaca, 1970), pp. 32–6, and especially *JHS* 92 (1972), 1–19; cf. also H. Lloyd-Jones, *The Justice of Zeus* (Berkeley, 1971). That in time the gods come to enforce some moral systems among men (discussed for example by Adkins, *M&R*, pp. 65–70) is of course true, but not in question here; what I am concerned with is the nature (and morality, if that proves to be a usable term) of the gods' direct interpersonal dealings with men.

<sup>2</sup> Naturally this is not to say that Hermes' injunction is not (in this case) based on moral principles, but only that here as elsewhere the gods expect obedience because they are gods, not because they are (by our standards) right. Thus Poseidon becomes angry with the Phaiakians at *Od.* 13. 125–83 simply because they sail too freely upon his sea, and retribution follows accordingly.

<sup>3</sup> It should be remembered that, contrary to some earlier thinking, Prometheus is not actually released in Hesiod's version; cf. M. L. West's comments in his edition of the *Theogony* (Oxford, 1966), pp. 313–15. Aischylos himself might be responsible for the innovation (there is no preserved indication of it before the *Lyomenos*), but in the present state of our knowledge that is no more than a possibility.

<sup>4</sup> Or more precisely, on Tyndareos *through* his daughters, since making them *διγάμους* and *τριγάμους* presumably hurts the father more than the children. Likewise Oineus, who failed to sacrifice to Artemis (*Il.* 9. 533 ff., *Bakch.* 5. 97 ff.), and whose fields and kingdom in consequence suffered the depredations of the boar.

<sup>5</sup> The story seems also to have appeared in the Hesiodic *Ehoiai* (fr. 131 MW), in Pherekydes (*FGrH* 3 F 114), and in Akousilaos (*FGrH* 2 F 28). Though the offence sometimes varies, the core of it is always a direct insult to one of the gods, and the punishment always insanity.

<sup>6</sup> This would appear to be Laios' primary transgression, if the evidence of *Sept.* 742–57 is to be trusted, but cf. also Lloyd-Jones, *JZ*, pp. 119–22. With regard to the Danaids, Aphrodite's

Dionysos by doubting his divinity.<sup>7</sup> Ixion rewards Zeus' purification of him (after his murder of his father-in-law) with an attempt to seduce Hera, and is bound to a wheel.<sup>8</sup> Sisyphos receives his rock after deceiving Hades in order to return to the upper world.<sup>9</sup> Prometheus is rather a special case, since he protests so vigorously the charge against him; we will return to his situation shortly. Finally, there is Xerxes, a transgressor not so much against any one god as against the *moira* and natural order supported by all the gods. Words such as ἄτη, ὕβρις, ὑπέρφεν, νόσος φρενῶν emphasize the nature of his folly,<sup>10</sup> his own father condemns him midway through the play, and Xerxes himself concedes the extent of his trespass at the end of the drama. In response comes a swift check to his excesses, the power of the gods (personified here as ὁ θεός | οἱ θεοί or ὁ δαίμων)<sup>11</sup> maintaining clearly defined limits of human conduct. The general nature of that response, moreover, often seems rather final. Agamemnon, Laios, Pentheus, and very probably Lykourgos, Ixion, and Sisyphos pay penalties which leave little room for further development; like Hesiod's Prometheus they are neither encouraged nor expected to learn from their contact with the divine.<sup>12</sup>

Thus the dangers of encroachment against the τιμή of the gods seem strongly underscored by Aischylos. But we may also view the other side of the coin, namely those points (if any) at which the gods have obligations to men. Unquestionably this is a touchy issue, since it involves the possible transfer of later moral values perhaps inappropriate to early Greek thinking. To quote H. Lloyd-Jones, in the context of a most important article on Aischylos, 'The gods by their laws encourage righteousness among men. But they themselves are not obliged to obey those laws, nor should we be reasonable to expect it.'<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless there do appear, even in Homer, situations where failure by the gods to act on behalf of men suggests an inability on their part to do so, and thus damages their τιμή. As Adkins points out, both Odysseus in the

appearance and speech in the third play (125<sup>M</sup>; 44<sup>N</sup>) surely indicate that their original position is contrary to her laws, whether their abhorrence is of their cousins or, as seems more likely, of men in general.

<sup>7</sup> The story of Lykourgos is given at *Il.* 6. 130–40; for Aischylos' tetralogy (attested by *Σ Thesm.* 134) cf. K. Deichgräber, *Nachr. Göttingen* (1938–9), 231–309. Lykourgos' exact vicissitudes in Aischylos are not clear, but certainly he maltreats the god, and undergoes chastisement. With Pentheus we are less sure of the group, but there seem to have been at least two plays (*Pentheus*, *Xantriai*) on the subject, and the remark of Aristophanes *grammaticus* (that the action of Euripides' *Bakchai* derives from the *Pentheus*) indicates a story similar to that of Euripides.

<sup>8</sup> The plays were *Perrhaibides* and *Ixion*; for details of the story cf. Pindar, *Pyth.* 2. 21–41 and scholia, *Σ A.R.* 3.62, Diod. Sic. 4.69, and Hyg. *Fab.* 33, 62. From the fragments we know that at least the murder of Eioneus was contained in the *Perrhaibides*.

<sup>9</sup> The two titles preserved (*Sisyphos Drapetes* and *Sisyphos Petrokylistes*) may perhaps refer to a single play (probably satyric). In any case the descriptive epicicles clearly indicate the action.

<sup>10</sup> For these and other examples of language stressing Xerxes' error, cf. *Pers.* 654, 719, 739–42, 750, 808–10, 820–2, 825–6 (all citations of Aischylos are from Page's 1972 OCT edition).

<sup>11</sup> References to the gods as a group or unified whole in this play are numerous: cf. for example *Pers.* 347, 454, 495, 514, 911, 921. By contrast, though Zeus, Athena, Ares, Apollo, Poseidon, Hermes, and Gaia are all mentioned by name, they appear rarely, and save for Zeus almost never in the sense of individually causing events. For Zeus' role and the nature of Xerxes' transgression, cf. R. P. Winnington-Ingram, *JHS* 93 (1973), 210–19.

<sup>12</sup> Certainly Cassandra, Laios, and Pentheus all die, and die, it seems, without grasping the error of their ways. Ixion and Sisyphos find a more concrete existence in the Underworld, but nothing in our tradition suggests that they (unlike Prometheus) were ever released, as they surely would have been had they benefited from their chastisement. Of Lykourgos' fate we remain uncertain; the satyr play bearing his name (a contest between beer and wine?) may indicate that he was allowed to come to terms with the god. In any case one might well recall Sokrates' portrait of the incurable sinner at *Gorgias* 525c ff.

<sup>13</sup> *JHS* 76 (1956), 66.

*Odyssey* and Hektor at the end of the *Iliad* have a certain claim on divine favour by virtue of past sacrifices and pious behaviour, and Zeus does regard those claims as an obligation.<sup>14</sup> Sacrifice to the gods will not always overcome every obstacle, but it does incur some degree of reciprocal commitment, if properly carried out. Similar in nature is the responsibility of Zeus Xeinios to enforce the rules of guest-friendship, even where these do not directly involve the gods. Such a role seems arbitrarily assigned, and may well spring from the sheer social necessity of protecting at least some of Adkins' 'cooperative' virtues.<sup>15</sup> More complex, and more important for our purposes, is the expectation of a certain straightforwardness from the gods, at least in verbal communication. At no time is any divine figure *required* to reveal information to mortals, but if he undertakes to do so, and in his own person, it is generally assumed that the information will be reliable. Thus when Athena appears directly to Diomedes in *Iliad* 5 and proposes the always risky pastime of attacking the gods, he accepts the genuineness of her support without question. In the same way throughout both epics, that which the gods say *qua* gods is taken at face value; should it prove otherwise, there would surely be grounds for reproach.<sup>16</sup> Related to this concept, I think, is the notion that while gods may be completely thoughtless and uncaring, they may not show unprovoked malice or take any special pleasure in human suffering.<sup>17</sup> Zeus himself remarks at *Odyssey* 1. 32–4 that men on their own bring about many of the woes for which they assign as cause (αἰτιόωνται) the gods; his subsequent illustration of Aigisthos would seem to indicate that the gods try to steer men in useful directions, when they try at all. That Zeus bothers to reject the charge may also suggest a concern with the way in which mortals regard him, and hence an acknowledgement of a theoretical right to complain on their part, though his vulnerability remains of course limited.<sup>18</sup> Again, documentation from post-Homeric sources is difficult owing to the lack of appropriate situations, but Pindar certainly offers a number of scenes in which mortal and divine come face to face, and these stoutly defend the integrity of the gods towards those they have chosen. Pelops, Iamos, Bellerophontes, Aiakos, and Peleus

<sup>14</sup> *M & R*, p. 64, *JHS* 92 (1972), 13–14; cf. also A. A. Long, *JHS* 90 (1970), 127–8.

<sup>15</sup> *JHS* 92 (1972), 9–11; cf. also Lloyd-Jones, *JZ*, pp. 5–7, and Long, *op. cit.* p. 138.

<sup>16</sup> Thus when Agememnon is deceived by an οἶλος ὄνειρος at *Il.* 2. 5 ff. he has only himself to blame, for he knew that such dreams (this one in the form of Nestor, not a god) are not always to be trusted. Similarly when Pandaros yields to the persuasion of Athena (disguised as Laodokos) at *Il.* 4. 86 ff., he does so on the strength of the words, not because he supposes a god to speak them; nor is it then Athena's fault if he does not live to collect the promised reward. Cf. also Apollo's impersonation of Agenor at 21. 595 ff. and Athena's of Deiphobos at 22. 226 ff. From 14. 197 ff. and 300 ff., incidentally, it appears that gods can lie to other gods, though this is rare.

<sup>17</sup> With strong emphasis, of course, on 'unprovoked'. Hera's hatred of the Trojans at the beginning of *Il.* 4 is bitter and intense (and extends far beyond the original transgressor), but it does have a cause; so too the anger of Poseidon in the *Odyssey*. Elsewhere, provided there is no offence against the gods, the common attitude seems that of Zeus at *Il.* 17. 445–7, where man's wretchedness evokes pity, not enjoyment. And if the gods themselves are partly cause of that general wretchedness, we must remember that it is basic to the human *moira*, and a necessary part of the separation between man and god. Thus Zeus may hand out ills universally from the jar by his threshold (24. 527–33; cf. *Mim.* 2.15–16) without incurring any special opprobrium, for how else are the gods alone to remain ἀκήδεις? But they do not as a rule inflict individual suffering unless they themselves are threatened; they do not need to.

<sup>18</sup> Adkins, *M&R*, pp. 24–5, reads the Aigisthos passage somewhat differently, emphasizing the denial of divine causality in Zeus' words. I would argue that Zeus *does* concede that some of men's evils come from the gods (see previous note). His point, I think, is rather that for what men suffer ὑπὲρ μόρον, *beyond* the nature of their human status, they must blame themselves. And here at least the dividing line is quite clear, for Hermes has told Aigisthos that his immediate ἀγαθόν will inevitably become a κακόν.

all draw from the divine world according to their merits; all are aided directly and without deceit. Yet it must also be remembered that in Pindar, as in Homer, divine favour is rarely permanent.<sup>19</sup> What the gods give, they give, but on that which they do not give we have no claim.

Against this tradition of restricted divine responsibility we may now consider Aischylos again. We have seen that the predictable, proper chastisement of human transgressions against the gods forms an important part of his work. But there are also (contrary to those who find the theology of *Prometheus Desmotes* un-Aischylean) a number of situations in his plays where the gods themselves seem to stand in the dock. That the gods may be 'guilty' in our sense of the word is a questionable proposition, of course, and to judge divine actions simply by our own standards will not do. My contention, however, is that Aischylos himself at times calls those actions into question, or at least allows his characters to do so.<sup>20</sup> What I should like to investigate in this paper is whether that kind of portrayal of the gods (to whatever purpose) may not also represent a pattern in the poet's thinking. To begin with, there is the fragment from the end of the second book of the *Republic* which Plato found so objectionable, namely Thetis' rebuke of Apollo after the death of her son:

ἐνδατεῖσθαι τὰς ἐμὰς εὐπαιδίας  
νόσων τ' ἀπείρους καὶ μακραίωνας βίου  
ξύμπαντα τ' εἰπὼν θεοφιλεῖς ἐμὰς τύχας  
παιᾶν' ἐπηυφήμησεν, εὐθυμῶν ἐμέ.  
κἀγὼ τὸ Φοῖβου θεῖον ἄψευδές στόμα  
ἡλπίζον εἶναι μαντικῇ βρῦον τέχνη.  
ὁ δ', αὐτὸς ὕμνων, αὐτὸς ἐν θοῖνῃ παρών,  
αὐτὸς τὰδ' εἰπὼν, αὐτὸς ἐστὶν ὁ κτανὼν  
τὸν παῖδα τὸν ἐμόν. (*Rep.* 2. 383b)<sup>21</sup>

'He celebrated my good fortune in my children, children free from sickness and long in the span of life. And telling of my future, dear to the gods in all respects, he sang, encouraging me, and I supposed the godly never-false words of Apollo to be filled with the prophetic art. But he himself singing, he himself being at the feast, he himself saying these things, he himself is the slayer of my child.' The drama in which the lines appeared is not given by Plato, and in consequence the lines have not received as much attention as they might. It is clear, however, that Thetis speaks of Achilleus' death, and that the setting is probably Troy. Given that much, we might well presume a location in a play built around the death and following Memnon's demise in the *Psychostasia*, or else place the fragment in the *Hoplion Krisis*, where Thetis seems to be called as a judge in the dispute over her son's arms.<sup>22</sup> I have argued elsewhere that

<sup>19</sup> Thus the cautionary aphorisms at *Ol.* 1. 109–10, *Ol.* 7. 94–5, the reversal of fortune for Peleus and Kadmos at *Pyth.* 3. 86–103 (followed by a similar aphorism at 104–5) and of course the ultimate fate of Bellerophon (cf. *Ol.* 13. 91–2, *Isth.* 7. 44–7).

<sup>20</sup> In what follows we must, of course, remember that the sentiments expressed by Aischylos' characters in situations of extreme duress are not necessarily the views the same characters would hold in calmer moments (cf. the remarks of Sir Kenneth Dover [to whom I am indebted for this observation] on emotive language in *JHS* 93 [1973], 66–7). Nevertheless I think the accusations studied here do offer some points of complaint which are not unreasonable, at least from the perspective of the plaintiff.

<sup>21</sup> 284<sup>M</sup>, 350<sup>N</sup>. Some question exists as to where the fragment actually commences, and hence how the first line should be read, but ἐνδατεῖσθαι does apparently take Apollo as subject, and the εὐπαιδία is in some way that of Thetis (mss. ἐὰς, emended by Grote to ἐμὰς).

<sup>22</sup> For the first view cf. F. G. Welcker, *Die Aeschyleische Trilogie Prometheus* (Darmstadt, 1824), pp. 436–7, and N. Wecklein, *Aischylos Dramata Sozomata II* (Athens, 1896), pp. 655–6; for the second, G. Hermann, *Opusc.* vii, 362 ff., and H. J. Mette, *Der Verlorene Aischylos* (Berlin, 1963), pp. 122–3.

the former possibility is the more likely, and that Thetis' agony over the death of Achilles may somehow relate to that of Eos over the death of Memnon at Achilles' hands.<sup>23</sup> The alternative, that either Thetis' grief or Apollo's duplicity would be relevant to Aias' problems, seems on the surface dubious. But despite our inability to be sure of the context, the fragment certainly offers us a very remarkable situation. Apollo, it appears, was present at a *θοίνη*; this is surely the wedding of Thetis itself, when all the gods attended in honour of the bride.<sup>24</sup> He sang a paian, and made certain predictions regarding Thetis' children, most notably that they would be *μακραίωνες*.<sup>25</sup> And yet Apollo himself has slain Achilles in the prime of life. Our sources for this clash are regrettably obscure. No pre-Aeschylean description of the wedding has survived, though Hera places Apollo at the festivities in the last book of the *Iliad*,<sup>26</sup> and thus we cannot be sure that the accusations made pre-date this particular version of them. But even if such predictions did occur in some earlier account, Aeschylos need not have repeated them here, in a context long after the wedding, unless he specifically chose to do so. And he does do so, in no uncertain terms. Apollo *was* at the feast, he *did* make the predictions in question, and Achilles *is* now dead. That Apollo bears responsibility for that death is not of course the main issue, though it intensifies the problem; Achilles might have offended him in any number of ways, or simply transgressed his allotted *moira* in attacking Troy.<sup>27</sup> What matters here is that the god of prophecy, whose utterances are by definition *ἄψευδέα* (and derive, as Aeschylos tells us elsewhere, from Zeus himself),<sup>28</sup> appears to have wilfully lied to Thetis. He knew that Achilles would die young, and indeed that he would be the cause, yet he suggested otherwise, a violation of form for any god, but especially for this one. Is there any escape for Apollo (or Zeus) in these facts? And what *are* we to make of a playwright who encourages such stories? But there is still more evidence to consider.

Though questions of divine veracity are not likely to be involved in our next

<sup>23</sup> The play in question, as Welcker and Wecklein argued, would be the third in a *Memnon-Psychostasia*—sequence (though Welcker wrongly supposed the *Toxotides* also included here). As a title the *Phrygiotai* seems to me promising; cf. also my article on the Medicean Catalogue forthcoming in *RhM*.

<sup>24</sup> Such, at least, is the conclusion of Plato, who locates the scene of the crime *ἐν τοῖς αὐτῆς γάμοις*; whether he also judges from these lines, or has other evidence from the context, we cannot say.

<sup>25</sup> There is little if any evidence for more than one offspring from the marriage; that Achilles was an only child is certainly the implication of Thetis at *Il.* 18. 436–8 and the statement of Achilles himself (though he *may* mean only sons) at 24. 540. To be sure, 16. 173–6 seems to suggest a daughter of Peleus, Polydora, and Hesiod (213 MW) concurs. But Pherekydes (*FGrH* 3 F 61) makes her a daughter of Peleus by one Antigone, and Homer may well have supposed something similar. For the earliest version of the story that Thetis dipped her previous children in water (or fire), cf. Hesiod fr. 300 MW (*Aigimios*). However this tale runs, only Achilles survives.

<sup>26</sup> 62–3. We learn further that he brought his lyre (as we might expect), but there is no mention of prophecies, nor any sense of his impending role in the death of Achilles; Hera's word *ἄπιστε* refers simply to his taking the part of Hektor. The wedding was certainly described at much greater length in the *Kypria*; unfortunately neither Proklos nor the preserved fragments give us the kind of information we are looking for.

<sup>27</sup> The horse Xanthos implies (*Il.* 19. 416–17; *θεῶν τε καὶ ἀνέρι ἴφι*) and our summary of the *Aithiopis* states that Paris and Apollo together slew Achilles; Proklos in the latter adds that Achilles had broken into Troy when he was killed. A different tradition seems to be represented by Pindar's Sixth *Paian* (78–86 SM), where despite the gaps in the papyrus Apollo apparently commits the deed in the guise of Paris.

<sup>28</sup> Apollo to Athena and the Erinyes at *Eum.* 616–18. One might, I suppose, object that Apollo was not in this instance *μαντικοῖσι ἐν θρόνοισι*, but it seems quibbling to deny that Thetis certainly understood his words as prophecy (*μαντικῇ βρύον τέχνη*, 284.6<sup>M</sup>).

example, the one substantial fragment from Aischylos' *Kares* also offers us the spectacle of a bereaved mother, namely Europa.<sup>29</sup> Again the context is uncertain, but we do see immediately that Aischylos has followed the Hesiodic *Ehoiai* in making his heroine bear Sarpedon as well as Minos and Rhadamanthys to Zeus.<sup>30</sup> The fragment itself is Europa's lament (presumably to a chorus of Karians) over her life, and here too we have a most unusual situation. Zeus' amatory affairs with mortal women are not a subject often broached by Homer, but where such matters do surface (as in *Il.* 14. 315–27) they seem of concern only to Hera.<sup>31</sup> The women involved in recompense all gave birth to great heroes (or a god), and this brings them honour far surpassing that of most mortals. Hesiod's (or better, the Catalogue Poet's) view is more explicitly taken, but much the same.<sup>32</sup> For him Zeus fulfils a vital function by populating the world, divine and human, in this fashion; from the women themselves we hear no complaint. And when we turn to Pindar, the distinction of submission to the divine embrace becomes positively exalted. Can anyone imagine Kyrene lamenting her seduction and settlement in Africa by Apollo? Or Aigina, destined to bear the race of Aiakos on the island named for her, suggesting that Zeus' treatment of her has been unjust?<sup>33</sup> For Pindar, as I think for his predecessors, such visitations are the height of attainable glory on a woman's part. Yet Aischylos' Europa appears to feel otherwise (indeed, that she is permitted to feel at all is remarkable). She describes first her abduction by Zeus (calling it a *κλέμμα*),<sup>34</sup> then the loss of her virginity and the labours of birth. In all this, it seems, she has not been unhappy, but Minos is now gone (the papyrus breaks off here).<sup>35</sup> Rhadamanthys is immortal (and hence, as she views it,

<sup>29</sup> 145<sup>M</sup>, 99<sup>N</sup>; cf. also Lloyd-Jones' discussion in his appendix to Smyth's Loeb *Aeschylus* II<sup>2</sup> (London, 1957), pp. 599–603, and F. Blass, *RhM* 35 (1880), 83–8.

<sup>30</sup> Frr. 140, 141 MW; Bakchylides (fr. 10 SM) may also have used this version. Homer, of course, has Sarpedon descend from Zeus and Laodameia daughter of Bellerophon (see *Il.* 6. 198–9), while at *Il.* 14. 321–2 he assigns to Europa only Minos and Rhadamanthys. Stesichoros also treated the adventures of Europa and Kadmos in his *Europeia*, but virtually nothing remains; the same is true for Simonides (562 PMG).

<sup>31</sup> Naturally the gods have numerous mortal children in Homer, but the mothers are rarely mentioned in detail; exceptions, such as the stories of Polydore and Polymele at *Il.* 16. 173–92, usually show the seduced finding husbands and fathers for their children without difficulty. To the acceptance of divine lovers by mortal women there is, however, one counter-example: Marpessa, who chooses Idas over Apollo (*Il.* 9. 555–64); no reasons for her reluctance are given.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. West's edition of the *Theogony*, 48–9, 397 ff. With regard to this author we might note *Scutum* 27–9 (fr. 195 MW), where Zeus is said to plan the begetting of an *ἀρῆς ἀλκτῆρα* for men (though this does not prevent him from also desiring Alkmene).

<sup>33</sup> Cf. also the references to Alkmene and Danae at *Nem.* 10. 10–1, and to Alkmene and Semele at *Pyth.* 11. 1–5. Less impressive perhaps are the roles played by Pitane and Evadne in *Ol.* 6, but clearly they too are honoured by their involvement at the birth of a hero (Iamos); that they may have been inconvenienced in the matter is not a question addressed by Pindar.

<sup>34</sup> As H. W. Smyth points out (*Aeschylus* II [London, 1926], p. 417), the words *αὐτοῦ μένων* would seem to indicate that Zeus remained on Crete while sending the bull to fetch Europa, and confirmation that such a version existed comes from Akousilaos (*FGrH* 2 F 29), where the bull is made the same one later captured by Herakles. Lloyd-Jones (above n. 29: 602) and Mette (n. 22: 109) both take the lines of the fragment rather differently, but Smyth's rendering seems the most natural way to read the Greek. We should remember, in any case, that Aischylos did not hesitate to turn Zeus into a bull at *Suppl.* 301 for his mating with Io. That Zeus himself was the bull in Europa's case is the version credited to Hesiod and Bakchylides (cf. previous note).

<sup>35</sup> The truncated opening of line 11 is run together with the following one, leaving it uncertain how much has been omitted. Blass supplied just the remainder of the line, but Buecheler (*RhM* 35 [1880], 94) argued for a larger lacuna; the context seems to support the latter view, since some setting-forth of Minos' absence is surely expected. The standard account has him die in Sicily at the court of Kokalos: so Herodotos 7. 170. 1 (without mention of Kokalos); Diod. Sic. 4. 79; Apollod. *Epit.* 1. 15. For other traditions cf. below n. 71.

lost to her: τὸ μὴ παρὸν δὲ τέρψιν οὐκ ἔχει φίλοις, 145.15<sup>M</sup>), and Sarpedon has left for Troy, where she fears he may fall in battle. Her anxiety over his possible death is well summed up in the final line: μὴ πάντα παίσας' ἐκχέω πρὸς ἔρματι, 'lest striking against a reef I lose all'. Yet the action of the play must surely turn around a report that Sarpedon has indeed been slain by Patroklos, and thus Europa will be left without any of the children whom Zeus forced her to bear. The consequent desolation for her, to judge from this speech, will be extreme. As we have seen, it is a situation not easy to judge on the basis of the surviving precedents. But that is in part because Aischylos (once again) chooses to present matters from a new and more difficult perspective. Zeus has brought Europa to this pass; he has fathered the children of her pain, after taking her from her own home and familiar world. Far from pitying the suffering of mortals, as he does in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, the ruler of the gods seems here to cause that suffering by his intervention in human affairs. Whether or not Europa formally accuses him of improper conduct, as Thetis does Apollo, we cannot say, but the implication that Zeus has been unkind to her is surely present.

Third, and again on the theme of the mother bereft of children, we have Niobe. Her loss, to be sure, springs directly from the arrogance of her offence against the τιμή of Leto, and the chastisement is certainly appropriate to the crime.<sup>36</sup> And yet the lost play, to judge from the fragments, showed neither the transgression nor the punishment, but only Niobe's wretched condition after the disaster has befallen her.<sup>37</sup> Seated on her children's tomb, mute for a good part of the play, she would seem likely to have evoked more pity from the audience than satisfaction at pride brought low. Then too, there are the lines cited by Plato at *Rep.* 2. 380a:

θεὸς μὲν αἰτίαν φύει βροτοῖς,  
ὅταν κακῶσαι δάμα παμπήδην θέλῃ

(273.15–16<sup>M</sup>)

'God creates a guilt (or cause) in mortals, when he wishes to destroy a house entirely.' The words have now been found to form part of PSI 1208 (Mette's fragment 273), and though the fragmentary context does not add a great deal, it does soften some of the severity of Plato's judgement; in particular the phrase μὴ θρασυστομ[εῖν suggests a reference to the original offence. Nevertheless, the notion of the gods *creating* a transgression is surely a surprising one.<sup>38</sup> Did not Niobe herself conceive the insults she directed against Leto? We should finally note also Aristophanes' parody

<sup>36</sup> Surprisingly, though Homer, Hesiod, Alkman, Sappho, Mimnermos, and Bakchylides (among others) all refer to the story, only in the *Iliad* (24. 602–17) is any detail preserved. Achilleus there tells us that Niobe dared compare herself to Leto, and to remark on her larger family; presumably a dramatic poet could have changed this if he wished.

<sup>37</sup> Such too is the almost inescapable inference from Aristoph. *Frogs* 911–15, where we learn that Niobe opened the drama veiled and silent; *Vit. Aesch.* reiterates this and adds the detail of the tomb for her children. For reconstructions cf. G. Hermann, *Opusc.* III 37–58, and especially A. D. Fitton-Brown, *CQ* N.S. 4 (1954), 175–80.

<sup>38</sup> Lloyd-Jones (*JZ*, p. 87) justifies the thought through the supposition that those mortals so treated are in fact guilty of some serious crime ('[Aeschylus'] Zeus does not punish the innocent'). But of what is Niobe guilty, that Zeus would cause her to boast? Lloyd-Jones' answer to this question seems to be his theory of ancestral guilt (*JZ*, p. 44), as in Solon and Theognis, whereby men may be forced to transgress so that they may atone for the transgressions of previous generations; thus Agamemnon is required to slay his daughter, and pay the penalty for it, in requital of his father's slaughter of the children of Thyestes. But by such a definition it is hard to see how anyone (at least in Greek mythology) will be very innocent. On the recognized weaknesses of this type of reasoning cf. *M&R*, pp. 68–70, and for preserved traces of it in the fifth and fourth centuries Dover, *Greek Popular Morality in the time of Plato and Aristotle* (Oxford, 1974), pp. 260–1.

at *Birds* 1247–8 (καὶ δόμους Ἀμφίωνος | καταιθαλώσω πυρφόροισιν αἰετοῖς, 276<sup>M</sup>)<sup>39</sup> with its implication that Zeus burned down entirely the house of Amphion. All this is admittedly thin ground, but still perhaps worth thinking about. Could Zeus have caused Niobe to err? And how thoroughly does the gods' anger destroy her world?

Next we come to the *Semele*, and a somewhat different situation: here the mother dies and the child survives. The story itself is familiar enough from later writers: Semele is seduced by Zeus, becomes pregnant with Dionysos (she appears thus on stage in Aischylos' play),<sup>40</sup> and perishes after rashly viewing her divine lover in full regalia. Should anyone question Zeus' behaviour here, we might well reply that Semele's own pride and consequent request are the source of her undoing. Yet the same later writers who give us the story are unanimous in making Hera, disguised as a well-wisher, the one responsible for luring Semele to that fatal request,<sup>41</sup> and P. Oxy. 2164 (355<sup>M</sup>), where Hera appears as a temple priestess, points in the same direction. This fragment has occasioned some debate, since, though it mentions Zeus and Semele, it also contains two lines assigned by Asklepiades to the *Xantriai*, a play almost certainly about Pentheus.<sup>42</sup> Such a theme could of course involve references back to earlier events in the family, but we must ask whether Hera would appear, and thus disguised, in the tale of Pentheus when all later accounts make her play that same role in the deception of Semele. We should also observe that the fragment probably contains a wish by the chorus for the same fate as Semele,<sup>43</sup> which is not likely to happen *after* her death. On balance, then, Asklepiades would seem to be mistaken, and the fragment more properly placed, with the majority of scholars, in the *Semele*. That being the case, neither Zeus nor Hera would appear to be treated very charitably in this drama; one wonders in particular whether the Zeus of Aischylos was deceived by his wife's stratagem,<sup>44</sup> and whether he was unwilling or simply unable to save his paramour.

<sup>39</sup> καταιθαλώσω is probably adapted from an original καταιθαλώσει (referring to Zeus in the third person). Lines 12–13 of 273<sup>M</sup> –

]δὲ μῆνιν τίνα φέρων Ἀμφίωνι  
]ζον αἰνῶς ἐξεφύλλασεν γέν[ος

– are surely also relevant here; though the crucial name at the beginning (Φοῖβος Maas; πατήρ Lesky) is lost, there is clearly a feeling of indignation and bewilderment over the scope of the punishment.

<sup>40</sup> So 358<sup>M</sup>, where she is not only pregnant, but ἐνθεαζομένη, and capable of making those who touch her γαστήρ likewise.

<sup>41</sup> So Apollod. *Bibl.* 3. 4. 3; Ovid, *Met.* 3. 256–315; Hyg. *Fab.* 167. In the latter two Hera plays Semele's nurse Beroe.

<sup>42</sup> Among those supporting the attribution to the *Xantriai* cf. R. Cantarella, *I Nuovi Frammenti Eschilei di Ossirinco* (Naples, 1948), pp. 108–28; F. Lasserre, *MH* 6 (1949), 140–56; E. R. Dodds, *Euripides: Bacchae*<sup>2</sup> (Oxford, 1960), pp. xxx–xxxi; for the *Semele*, K. Latte, *Philologus* 97 (1948), 47–56; Lloyd-Jones, *App. Smyth*, pp. 566–71; Mette, *Ver. Aisch.*, pp. 141–3. Neither Cantarella nor Lasserre seems to see that the problems with Semele in a Pentheus play are largely eliminated by shifting the ascription; their further insistence that the chorus is *descended* from Semele (who would be the father?) depends entirely on Lasserre's supplement λα[χοῦσαι, which is far from the only possibility. Dodds contents himself with noting that there is no *proof* of Asklepiades' error, and he is of course right. But Latte's article offers substantial grounds for supposing that such an error probably did take place, and that the fragment belongs where we should otherwise not have hesitated to place it, in the *Semele*.

<sup>43</sup> Assuming, with Lloyd-Jones, Mette, and others, Latte's supplement λά[χος (Lloyd-Jones adds ὄλβου) at 355. 11<sup>M</sup>.

<sup>44</sup> Homer's Zeus, of course, is quite easily deceived by Hera (though not to any *permanent* advantage, as would be the case with Semele), and likewise Hesiod's Zeus by Prometheus (as a necessary part of the aetiology), but it still seems hard to imagine such a situation in Aischylos. One wonders how Ixion's attempt to seduce Hera (and its concomitant betrayal of Zeus' trust) was handled in the play of that name.



As for Hera, her *τιμή* as Zeus' consort is no doubt infringed upon by the affair, but was Semele likely to have any choice in the matter? Her actions here certainly seem to illustrate the point of 273<sup>M</sup> from the *Niobe*, that the gods create offences in those they wish to destroy. And yet the result of all this is the birth of Dionysos, a blessed event springing from a matrix of adultery and deceit present in all accounts but thrown into surprisingly sharp focus by Aischylos.

The picture, however, may have been darker still, for Aischylos also wrote a play (*Toxotides*) about Aktaion, son of Semele's sister Autonoe. Our later sources recount in detail how he offended Artemis by watching her bathe, and was turned into a stag to be torn apart by his own hounds.<sup>45</sup> But there was also another account, known to Stesichoros and Akousilaos and probably the author of the *Ehoiai*, to the effect that Zeus had Artemis kill Aktaion because the latter had become a rival for Semele's favours.<sup>46</sup> If this was the version more current in Aischylos' time (the bathing story is found first in Kallimachos),<sup>47</sup> we might naturally expect it to form some part of his play. Moreover, a fragmentary line from the *Semele* – Ζεύς, ὃς κατέκτα τοῦτον (359<sup>M</sup>) – gives strong ground for such suspicion; the *τοῦτον* cannot refer to Semele, and it is difficult to imagine whom else Zeus might kill in this context.<sup>48</sup> But if Aktaion was slain by Zeus (directly or indirectly), and if his death did carry over into the *Semele* (where it would have little point unless it referred to a former suitor), then Zeus' conduct becomes still more troubling. Aktaion, of course, might have foolishly insisted on pressing his suit in the face of Zeus' opposition and plans for the birth of Dionysos, and hence brought about his own death. But we might also have seen in this play the ruler of the gods removing a mortal competitor by something close to murder in order to reserve Semele for himself, then (as the trilogy progressed) abandoning her to Hera's vengeance.<sup>49</sup>

Amid these considerations one could also speculate on Zeus' treatment of Kallisto and Alkmene in Aischylos' plays by those names, or Athena's (if it is she) marking for Aias in the *Thressai* where he might be killed, but in none of these instances can

<sup>45</sup> Cf. Kallimachos *H.* 5. 107–16; Apollod. *Bibl.* 3. 4. 4 (where the bathing motif is credited to οἱ πλείονες); Ovid, *Met.* 3. 138–252; Hyg. *Fab.* 180, 181. Euripides at *Bakchai* 337–40 makes Aktaion rather boast to be greater than Artemis in the hunt, and Diod. Sic. 4. 81. 4–5 adds to that version the report that he proposed to marry the goddess. In any case it is clear that the process of assigning some misdeed to Aktaion begins early. From these later accounts only the hounds and the manner of Aktaion's death (422<sup>M</sup>) can be established for certain as Aischylean.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. for Stesichoros 236 *PMG* (quoted from Paus. 9. 2. 3), and for Akousilaos *FGrH* 2 F 33 (quoted from Apollod. *Bibl.* 3. 4. 4). The recently published P. Mich. 1447 (T. Renner, *HSCP* 82 [1978], 282–7) contains an account of Aktaion purporting to derive from the *Catalogue* and mentioning a desire for marriage with someone who is *almost* certainly Semele (the ends of some lines are broken off). Unfortunately the passage goes on to detail the metamorphosis into a stag (by Artemis) without allowing us to see the exact cause, and whether the gap at this point is sufficient to allow for Zeus' role is hard to say.

<sup>47</sup> Above n. 45. It may or may not be significant that in the hymn in question the viewing of the goddess naked serves as a convenient parallel to Teiresias' similar offence against Athena.

<sup>48</sup> Such was already the judgement of J. G. Droysen, *Phrynichos, Aischylos und die Trilogie* (Kiel, 1841), pp. 77–8; so also Latte (above n. 42) 52–3 (where 'Acteonis' is presumably meant for 'Alcmeonis'). Droysen further suggests, contrary to general assumption, that the *Toxotides* and *Semele* were parts of the same tetralogy, a theory with which I concur.

<sup>49</sup> We have seen that Idas managed to recover Marpessa from his divine competitor Apollo without suffering harm (above n. 31), and in general this is not a situation which seems to cause the gods distress; Zeus, for example, is quite willing to share Alkmene and Leda with their husbands. The case of Koronis and Apollo (*Ehoiai* 59, 60 MW; Pindar, *Pyth.* 3. 8–46) offers more of a parallel, but here Koronis is clearly expected to know that her marriage with Ischys will anger the god, and his wrath falls primarily upon her.

we say even what the gods' motives *appeared* to be.<sup>50</sup> It seems best, therefore, to turn now to a play which is preserved intact, and which contains perhaps the most startling indictment of Zeus in Greek tragedy – the *Prometheus Desmotes*. It may, of course, be objected that where Aischylean authorship itself is not absolutely certain,<sup>51</sup> there will be risks in attempting to extrapolate Aischylean motifs. But I hope the material surveyed above will suggest, however sketchily, that the *accusations* (they are in the preserved play no more than that) levelled against Zeus in the *Prometheus* are not as un-Aischylean as is sometimes supposed. That argument, even if accepted, will not establish authenticity; it may, however, help us to see in the play's author a man who, if not Aischylos himself, was at least well acquainted with the latter's dramatic theology. The charges made by Prometheus are too familiar to need full rehearsal here: Zeus is (in Prometheus' words) a tyrant, a new and uncertain ruler who fails to appreciate his benefactors, punishes dissent excessively, and desires to wipe out all mankind. This much, to be sure, is second-hand, but we see for ourselves the nature of Prometheus' punishment, and if Kratos' harshness at the beginning of the play is simply in character, the portrait of Hermes at the end is unexpectedly grim. But the core of the prosecution's attack is unquestionably Io (almost certainly an Aischylean addition), and it is here that the parallels become pointed.<sup>52</sup> Like Europa she is snatched away from her home to satisfy Zeus' passion,<sup>53</sup> and like Semele she is pursued by Hera's jealousy. Moreover, the play supplies her story from the very beginning, with no suggestion of wrongdoing on her part (Zeus' eye simply falls upon her), and hence little possibility that she at least is anything but an innocent victim. The potential impact of all this is not lost on Prometheus; he marshals the telling of Io's fate most effectively to characterize Zeus for the chorus, and it is scarcely surprising that on the evidence they choose to accompany his descent at the end of the play.<sup>54</sup> Before, keeping in mind Prometheus' own offences against Zeus, they had wavered in their support of him, wondering if perhaps he might not be largely at fault. Now, having heard the testimony of his surprise witness (a surprise of course also to him, but no less useful for that), they are inclined to condemn Zeus in precisely the terms suggested. Nor would it be astonishing if the audience itself harboured some of the same sympathies, given the strength of the case the playwright has allowed his protagonist to make.

Thus we seem to have, I think, a pattern of some complexity, defined or likely in

<sup>50</sup> Of the *Kallisto* we have virtually nothing except the title; likewise for the *Alkmene* (which is missing from the Medicean Catalogue). The story of the former (if Apollod. *Bibl.* 3. 8. 2. can be trusted) would seem to show Kallisto impregnated by Zeus and then left to Artemis' anger, much as Semele is left to that of Hera. But Aischylos' version may have varied considerably from this. For the *Thressai*, 292<sup>M</sup> indicates that a female deity (identity not clear) showed Aias where he was mortal (the armpit); her reasons for doing so are unspecified. One might consider as well Danae, whose tactful prayer in Simonides 543 *PMG* could easily become something more reproachful, but we cannot be sure that her story was treated at any length in the Perseus tetralogy (for the possibilities cf. Cantarella, above n. 42: 66–70, and T. P. Howe, *AJA* 57 [1953], 269–75).

<sup>51</sup> Cf. recently M. Griffith, *The Authenticity of Prometheus Bound* (Cambridge, 1977), and West in *JHS* 99 (1979), 130–48.

<sup>52</sup> It is the omission of Io from his discussion of the *Desmotes* that seems to me to seriously weaken Lloyd-Jones' analysis of the trilogy (*JZ*, pp. 95–103). Io is brought into this play where there was no compulsion to do so, and her condition is surely illustrative of and linked to that of Prometheus, since both suffer from the actions of Zeus.

<sup>53</sup> *Desm.* 645–72. Both dream and Delphic response simply command, with no reasons given other than the 'arrow of desire' which has afflicted Zeus. The sequence of events which follows is compressed and unclear; if *εὐθύς* at 673 is to be taken literally, Io is changed into a cow immediately, without in fact seeing or being embraced by Zeus.

<sup>54</sup> That the chorus did follow Prometheus seems clearly indicated by the text: cf. O. Taplin, *The Stagecraft of Aeschylus* (Oxford, 1978), pp. 270–2, and West, *JHS* 99 (1979), 139–40.

a number of Aischylos' plays, where the gods are accused of conduct scarcely in accord with the rules we (hopefully) found to be valid at the start of this paper. It should be stressed that this is a pattern of dramatic structure, not motivation; we can say with some certainty what Hera did to Semele, or Apollo to Thetis, but not why, given the state of our evidence. On that consideration I have tried to emphasize, in the first part of this paper, the existence of such behaviour, while passing over the possible reasons for it. Indeed, if we are to believe Lloyd-Jones,<sup>55</sup> there may have been no reasons at all, or at any rate none that we might comprehend. But it should be apparent that in some cases at least Aischylos, unlike his contemporary Pindar, does not accept the gods on their own terms, but goes out of his way to present them in situations that invite judgement. Nothing obliged him to impugn Apollo's veracity in dramatizing the death of Achilleus. Nothing necessitated showing Europa as a forsaken woman, or Niobe's bereavement shorn of the motivating transgression. And certainly nothing in his tradition is likely to have suggested that Io's sufferings would have a place in a play about Prometheus. Yet Aischylos insists on these scenes when he could easily have avoided them. It is as if he wished at times for his gods to appear in the worst possible light. And perhaps (for better or worse) that is the light in which he actually saw them. But perhaps too these appearances are meant to deceive, and in fact merely set the stage for a vindication the more impressive as the initial view is more grim. In any case, it will be only fair to allow the accused their opportunity to present a defence. We may begin with some of the more difficult charges, those made on behalf of Io in the *Desmotes*.

In considering Io's fate it is sometimes forgotten that we do have in the play (from Prometheus himself) some indication of her future, in contrast to the situation with Semele or Europa (or even Niobe). There are further trials, to be sure – the Scythians, the Kalybes, the crossing of the Caucasus and Bosporos, the Arimaspians, and so forth. But there will also be an end to these sufferings when Io reaches the land of the Nile, for there she is to find a home, and the cessation of her bovine deformity through the touch of Zeus, by whom she will bear Epaphos, the lord of Egypt.<sup>56</sup> Whether this final repose, and the glory of founding a new race of rulers, constitute sufficient compensation for all that Io has suffered is a moot point; nor can it be said (in this play at least) why such hardships should be necessary to the desired end, when Zeus could simply have taken Io to Egypt. But it is nevertheless the case, for whatever it is worth, that as Io's misfortunes are caused by Zeus, so her release from them is through his agency. Does he tire of tormenting his (perhaps) paramour, or is there a deeper purpose in what has been brought about? Much the same circumstances of course surround Prometheus' own tribulations, since we know that his release can come only with Zeus' consent.<sup>57</sup> Here, though, the issues are far more complicated, for Prometheus holds a bargaining tool unavailable to Io. Is he freed by Herakles because he reveals the secret of Zeus' overthrow? Or does he reveal the secret after he is freed, when there is no compulsion to do so?<sup>58</sup> In other words, do he and Zeus

<sup>55</sup> Above n. 13.

<sup>56</sup> *Desm.* 846–52. Here again there is an oddity in the narrative; Zeus impregnates Io ἐπαφῶν...καὶ θιγῶν μόνον, thus seemingly confirming the impression of 673 that no intercourse took place before, and also establishing that the πόθος of Zeus is not relieved now, either.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. *Desm.* 258, 375–6. Prometheus does of course also make predictions involving his release after Zeus is overthrown, but the audience will know that this cannot actually happen, and presumably any liberation during his reign must ultimately have his approval.

<sup>58</sup> The question is a most vexed one. If Athenaios (*Deipn.* 15. 674d) is correct in assigning the custom of the expiatory crown to the *Lyomenos*, and if *Σ Desm.* 167's account of Zeus being warned as he chases Thetis through the Caucasians is Aischylean (cf. Apollod. *Bibl.* 3. 42. 5),

come to an understanding of each other, or do they merely transact a bargain, as Lloyd-Jones would argue?<sup>59</sup> We cannot say. Yet there remains the fact that Zeus will bring about (or at least accept) the ending of Prometheus' imprisonment, much as he has already released the other Titans (one wonders, *pace* Lloyd-Jones, whether they also struck a bargain).<sup>60</sup> Thus the lord of Olympos emerges (here at any rate) as a god who can and does bring matters to agreeable conclusions, whatever we may think of his initial actions.

Given such considerations, a defence might well contend that elsewhere too the evidence leaves room for further, more conciliatory developments. Semele, of course, is destroyed by the radiance of Zeus' person, but her situation even outside of Aischylos is not regarded as tragically as one might expect. As Herakles (whose sufferings from Hera's jealousy may well have been recounted in the *Lyomenos* as a parallel to those of Io)<sup>61</sup> ascends to Olympos after *his* release from mortal labours, so both the end of the *Theogony* and Pindar make Semele join the gods, while the later testimony of Pausanias and Apollodoros sends Dionysos down into Hades to bring his mother up from the dead for that same honour.<sup>62</sup> Such a resolution was perhaps only to be expected inasmuch as Semele is the mother of a god, and might easily have been included in Aischylos' production through a messenger speech at the end of the play (Zeus announcing the apotheosis) or through the offices of Dionysos in a subsequent drama (linked with the *Semele* in a connected tetralogy).<sup>63</sup> Thus here again Zeus would have the opportunity to undo earlier damage, or even to manipulate that damage towards a specific end. Aktaion is another matter; if later authors found the motive of his death distasteful, they at any rate mitigated the harshness by turning to a different form of transgression which exculpated Zeus rather than compensated Aktaion. Perhaps, in some way (though it will not of itself justify the death of a central

then it would certainly appear that the secret is divulged, Prometheus freed, and a reconciliation arrived at, in that order. Also supporting this view might be the fragment of Philodemos π. εὐσεβείας at p. 41 Gomperz, where it *may* be said that the release is caused by the divulging of the secret (this depends on the reading and interpretation of ὁ[τι]). On the other hand, Prometheus' failure to correct Io at *Desm.* 771 suggests (unless following Pauw we emend ἄκοντος to ἀρχοντος) that the release will be accomplished without Zeus' permission (at least initially), and fr. 333<sup>M</sup>, with its cry of ἐχθροῦ πατρός μοι, indicates that feelings are still rather strained at the time of that release. Perhaps, though it crowds a lot into the *Lyomenos*, Herakles released Prometheus on his own, and the latter then disclosed Thetis' name to Zeus in the emergency of the immediate pursuit. Such a resolution would of course require some change of heart by Prometheus (contra West, *JHS* 99 [1979], 142–4, who argues that no change is necessary because Prometheus is simply fulfilling a promise to Herakles; I do not myself quite see why Prometheus needs to promise Herakles anything if he still despises Zeus). For a good summary of all these matters cf. Fitton-Brown, *JHS* 79 (1959), 52–60.

<sup>59</sup> Above n. 13: 67, and *JZ*, pp. 97, 102–3.

<sup>60</sup> Philodemos (p. 39 Gomperz) seems to suggest that Kronos also was freed; cf. *Eum.* 641–6, where Apollo implies something of the sort. Pindar for his part places Kronos on the Isles of the Blessed in *Ol.* 2. 76–7, and refers to the release of all the Titans at *Pyth.* 4. 291 (perhaps also in fr. 35 SM). Earlier sources (*Iliad*, *Theogony*, *Delphic Hymn to Apollo*) uniformly retain them under the earth.

<sup>61</sup> On the general similarities in Aischylos' use of these two figures cf. G. Thomson, *Prometheus Bound* (Cambridge, 1932), pp. 24–8, 36–7. Herakles' entry into Olympos is at least as old as *Theog.* 950–5 and *Nekyia* 602–4 (even if this last is no older than Onomakritos), and of course frequently represented in sixth-century Attic Black-Figure.

<sup>62</sup> *Theog.* 942; Pindar, *Ol.* 2. 25–7, *Pyth.* 11. 1; Paus. 2. 31. 2; Apollo. *Bibl.* 3. 5. 3.

<sup>63</sup> If Droysen (above n. 48) is right in assigning the *Toxotides* and *Semele* to a single production, we might logically expect a third play (*Athamas*?) to follow, in which news of Semele's apotheosis might be announced (or even dramatized). If on the other hand the more conventional *Semele–Pentheus–Xantriai* (or *Bakchai*) grouping is retained, Dionysos could easily report on his mother's situation in the course of his dealings with Pentheus.

character in a play), his sacrifice is necessary to the birth of Dionysos. Fragment 421<sup>M</sup> may also suggest a slighting reference to unchaste women – did Aktaion revile someone whose condition gave evidence of such activity?<sup>64</sup> It would help, to be sure, if we knew whether Semele cared for Aktaion, and we do not.

Next, working back through the situations detailed earlier, we return to Niobe and Europa. Of Niobe's ultimate fate we do possess some useful early indications; Homer tells us that she is a rock on Mount Sipylus,<sup>65</sup> and Bakchylides and Pherekydes add that she prayed to Zeus for this transformation in her misery.<sup>66</sup> In assigning the event to an act of mercy by Zeus the latter two writers could well have taken Aischylos as their source, even if lithification is not exactly our own notion of divine grace. We should remember also that Niobe is consistently guilty of a serious offence in our tradition, and almost certainly so too in Aischylos, a poet for whom punishment is sure and redemption rare in such matters.<sup>67</sup> How all this might have been dramatized is harder to say; the play is set in Thebes (where Tantalos comes to find his daughter), not Lydia, and our evidence makes it unlikely that there was a sequel.<sup>68</sup> Possibly Niobe's later transformation was revealed by divine pronouncement in the closing stages of the drama, as I have suggested for the *Semele*, but it is of course possible too that Aischylos took the story in a very different direction. Perhaps her sin, like Io's peregrinations, really was divinely inspired, and brought her through desolation to an end we cannot see. Amid these uncertainties Amphion remains a total mystery; we do not even know for sure whether he did burn up with his house, nor if his actions in any way merited punishment.<sup>69</sup> Like Aktaion he may have served as a foil to the creation of the desired depth of suffering. About Europa we know still less, save that an account taken from Hesiod and/or Bakchylides would have her married off to Asterion, king of Crete.<sup>70</sup> Such an eventuality would provide her with company in her old age, but it seems unlikely to replace her sons, nor does it really address the strong sense of loss in the preserved fragment of the *Kares*. That fragment, however, does establish the immortality of Rhadamanthys, who is surely to be located (so Homer, Pindar, and others) in the Isles of the Blessed as judge over the dead.<sup>71</sup> Given then that Aischylos probably has considerable latitude in shaping this myth, we might

<sup>64</sup> 421<sup>M</sup>: νέας γυναικὸς οὐ μὲ μὴ λάθῃ φλέγων  
ὀφθαλμός, ἣ τις ἀνδρὸς ἣ γεγευμένη

Cf. also 420<sup>M</sup>, where marriage and the wishes of women seem to be an issue, and 419<sup>M</sup>, where there *may* be a hint of boastfulness in the hunt.

<sup>65</sup> *Il.* 24. 614–17; cf. M. M. Willcock, *CQ* N.S. 14 (1964), 141–2, for the uncertainties over the details of the story as Homer tells it.

<sup>66</sup> Bakch. fr. 20 D SM; Pherekydes *FGrH* 3 F 38.

<sup>67</sup> Cf. above n. 12.

<sup>68</sup> Aside from the lack of other appropriate titles or fragments, there are the remarks of Aristotle at *Poet.* xviii. 1456a 15–19. The text here presents some difficulties, but it seems likely that Aischylos as well as Euripides is being commended (as opposed to Agathon) for treating only a limited part of a story, in this case that of Niobe.

<sup>69</sup> None of our information on the fate of Amphion is very early. Telesilla (721 *PMG*) suggests that he also was shot by Apollo and Artemis; Hyginus (*Fab.* 9) adds to this that he tried in his anger to attack the temple of Apollo, and was slain for that reason. In Ovid (*Met.* 6. 271–2) he apparently commits suicide, while Paus. 9. 5. 8 pictures him as punished in Hades.

<sup>70</sup> The relevant text, a scholion to *Il.* 12. 292, credits this and other details to both authors: cf. Hesiod fr. 140 MW, and Bakch. fr. 10 SM.

<sup>71</sup> Cf. *Od.* 4. 563–4; Pindar, *Ol.* 2. 74–7, *Pyth.* 2. 73–4. The *Nekyia*, on the other hand, makes him a judge of the dead of the Underworld; so also Diod. Sic. 5. 79. 2 (with Minos). In Plato, *Gorgias* 523–4, both Rhadamanthys and Minos appear as judges in the meadow leading to Elysion and Tartaros.

suppose Europa to join her son in Elysion as recompense for her abduction by Zeus.<sup>72</sup> On the other hand (not to offer on Zeus' behalf too much) it might be too that she comes rather to understand the need for the roles her sons have played, and to accept her part in that, much as the Danaids receive from Aphrodite not what they prayed for in the *Suppliants*, but an explanation of how their world must function.<sup>73</sup>

Finally we come back to Thetis. We have seen that her charges against Apollo are direct and specific, and involve not just the moral conduct of the accused, but a contradiction in his entire divine essence. Yet the very seriousness of the indictment may lead to its solution, for not even the Aischylos of Lloyd-Jones is likely to have permitted a claim of lying by Apollo to stand. By placing the god in a position which denies his divinity the playwright virtually obligates himself to find a way out. Here our other sources may again help. In the *Nekyia* Achilles is inextricably trapped in Hades, and not at all pleased about it.<sup>74</sup> But Ibykos, Simonides, and Pindar agree in placing him rather in Elysion, and Pindar further specifies that Zeus gave Thetis permission to take him there.<sup>75</sup> With such authorities we may well be less hesitant in considering such a version for Aischylos than we were in the case of Europa, and thus Thetis' grief over the death of her son might be assuaged. Yet transcendence of that death, even assuming it took place, will not by itself absolve Apollo of duplicity in his predictions at the wedding. What we need, if we are to defend the god, is a means of squaring his prophecy with the actual results. As we hear from Thetis directly, he promised that she would enjoy *εὐπαῖδια*, that her children would be free from *νόσοι*, and that they moreover would be *μακραίωνας βίου* (*βίους*).<sup>76</sup> We see immediately that the second point is quite true; in dying young, Achilles has avoided the illnesses and infirmities of old age. But the third point would appear the crux of the matter: how can an Achilles slain at Troy be *μακραίων*? By itself, of course, the word need not refer solely to *mortal* longevity; elsewhere it is used (in Sophokles) both of the Moirai and of mountain nymphs.<sup>77</sup> Construed with *βίος*, however, it would seem to point in the direction of a human lifespan. Nevertheless the exact sense (and reading) of these two words together is debatable, and we must remember too that Apollo is known for truth cloaked in a certain amount of ambiguity. His words might in fact only *seem* to promise extended mortal life, while in reality foretelling the much higher destiny of an existence like that of the gods (where Achilles really would be *ἄνοσος*).<sup>78</sup>

<sup>72</sup> I suppose one could place Minos and Sarpedon there as well, though this seems to take matters rather far into the realm of hypothesis. In Minos' case there is some evidence to link him with Rhadamanthys (see previous note), but nothing to locate him firmly in Elysion. Certainly at the time of Europa's speech (where Rhadamanthys is called *ἄφθιτος παῖδων ἐμῶν*) he is regarded as mortal.

<sup>73</sup> Cf. above n. 6 and my article on the *Suppliants* in *Phoenix* 32 (1978), 279–87.

<sup>74</sup> *Od.* 11. 471–91. It is perhaps worth noting that neither here, nor in the case of Rhadamanthys, nor that of Herakles, does the author of the original *Nekyia* seem aware of any allowable destination for souls other than some part of Hades; hence his location of these figures would appear a matter of policy rather than selective exclusion.

<sup>75</sup> Ibykos 291 *PMG*; Simonides 558 *PMG*; Pindar, *Ol.* 2. 79–80 (where Thetis is mentioned), *Nem.* 4. 49–50. Cf. also Eur. *Andr.* 1259–62.

<sup>76</sup> Owing to the difficulties of the first line we cannot be certain whether the *εὐπαῖδια* is that of Thetis or the children, but the sense (that the children will be fortunate) would seem the same in either case. In line 2 the manuscript reading *βίους* is often emended to *βίον* (so Nauck and Mette); neither construction is entirely satisfactory, nor does the change of *μακραίωνας* to *μακράωνος* (with *βίον*) solve all problems.

<sup>77</sup> For the Moirai cf. *Ant.* 987; for the nymphs, *O.T.* 1099.

<sup>78</sup> Though the absence of context makes any conclusions hazardous, one is still tempted to recall two unplaced Aischylean lines: *ἀπάτης δικάϊας οὐκ ἀποστατεῖ θεός* (601<sup>M</sup>) – 'God does not stand apart from just deceit' (cf. *Pers.* 93–4, where the elders' judgement is perhaps

The dramatic advantages of such procedure (where the audience, like future generations of scholars, is unable to perceive the entire plot immediately) should also be obvious. Finally, if we have correctly reconstructed Achilleus' fate in Aischylos, then the god's first point, the *ἐνπαιδία* of Thetis, would be confirmed as well. And thus Thetis' charges would be wholly refuted, both in letter and in spirit, as Apollo's prophecy moved towards a conclusion beyond her original grasp of the situation.<sup>79</sup>

Much of what has been suggested in the second part of this paper is unquestionably speculation, and must be judged as such. Nor would I wish anyone to suppose from these remarks that I imagined a totally benevolent Zeus, committed to helping and reforming mankind at every turn.<sup>80</sup> But I would like to stress two points which I think can be asserted (on a general level at least) with some confidence. First, Aischylos does impute to his Olympians, on a number of occasions, behaviour of a surprising (even for gods) morality; the *Desmotes*, far from being atypical, reaches to the very heart of Aischylean theology in this respect. Second, in most of these cases the resulting crisis offers ample room for reconciliation, recompense, or re-evaluation, and usually with the full support of our non-Aischylean accounts of the period. Yet these resolutions, even should they follow the lines proposed above, require a strangely convoluted road to final bliss, and time after time the gods themselves seem to lead men forcibly through suffering and despair to attain that goal. No answer to such a central riddle of man's existence will satisfy everyone, and in the absence of better evidence none will be attempted here; not for nothing, after all, are the ways of Zeus *δανλοί* and *δάσκιος*, his desire *οὐκ εὐθήρατος*. But it may not be entirely irrelevant to recall the *Agamemnon's* much discussed conceit of *πάθει μάθος*, with its implications of a peculiarly Aischylean value in labouring towards some distant comprehension.<sup>81</sup> And we might wonder, too, whether some of that struggle and pain, as well as the final outcome, is not contained in the subsequent remark of the same play's chorus: *δαϊμόνων δέ που χάρις βίαιος* – 'from the gods grace comes somehow violent'.<sup>82</sup>

University of Georgia

TIMOTHY GANTZ

questionable), and *ψευδῶν δὲ καιρὸν ἔσθ' ὅπου τιμᾶ θεός* (602<sup>M</sup>) – 'there is a time for even God to honour the rightness of a lie'. Presumably the second remark could not apply to Apollo, but the first one might be relevant here.

<sup>79</sup> It could admittedly be argued against this whole reconstruction that Plato says nothing about any vindication of Apollo in Aischylos' play. But we should keep in mind that what distressed Plato was the *suggestion* of divine immorality, not the eventual facts of the case; in his view, the damage to impressionable minds had already been done. Cf. too the words of Eduard Fraenkel in his 1942 paper on recently discovered fragments: 'Had Plato been fair – but he never wanted to be fair to Aeschylus...' (*Proc. Brit. Acad.* [1942], 239).

<sup>80</sup> As counter-examples one might note that Atlas (lamented by Prometheus at *Desm.* 347–50; cf. 619<sup>M</sup>, where the Pleiades weep for their father) is a figure not likely to be relieved of his task, while Cassandra's unhappiness with her treatment by Apollo in *Agamemnon* finds little consolation in the following plays.

<sup>81</sup> *Agam.* 176–8. Against Lloyd-Jones' contention (above n. 13: 62) that Agamemnon, Klytaimestra, and Aigisthos are in no way improved, I would argue that it is the *innocent* (or only slightly misguided) who are meant to learn from their own suffering.

<sup>82</sup> *Agam.* 182–3.