

## EUMENIDES IN GREEK TRAGEDY

The word *Εὐμενίδες* occurs six times in our texts of Greek tragedy (four times in Eur. *Or.*, twice in Soph. *O.C.*) and once as a play title (Aesch. *Eum.*).<sup>\*</sup> This may make ‘Eumenides in Greek tragedy’ sound like a restricted subject, but it is one that has seldom been discussed as a whole, and scholars have tended to consider each of the three plays in question in the light of unargued assumptions about the other two, and about the nature and affinities of Eumenides in general. I shall begin with some introductory remarks on cults, since not all the information is readily available in reference books,<sup>1</sup> and then discuss the three plays in turn, starting for convenience with the *Orestes*.

## I. CULTS OF EUMENIDES AND ALLIED BEINGS

*Eumenides*

Cults of Eumenides, under that name, are known to me from the following places.<sup>2</sup>

1. Colonus. A grove at Colonus, near Athens, was the site of the cult that is most familiar today. It is attested only by Soph. *O.C.* (and such derivative sources as ps.-Apollod. 3. 5. 9), and not by Pausanias,<sup>3</sup> who mentions other deities of Colonus at 1. 30. 4. Nevertheless, I do not doubt<sup>4</sup> that it genuinely existed in Sophocles’ day; a grove could easily have failed to survive from the fifth century B.C. to the second A.D., and Pausanias’ account of Colonus is in any case brief. Sophocles mentions the Eumenides alongside other deities who were certainly worshipped in the neighbourhood (*O.C.* 39–63), and this would have confused the audience if the cult had been fictitious, though it may well have been of little importance. The nature of the Eumenides at this site, as described by Sophocles, will be discussed in Section IV.

2. Near Sicyon. The evidence is Pausanias 2. 11. 4, where we read of ‘a grove of holm oaks and a temple of the goddesses whom the Athenians call Semnai and the Sicyonians Eumenides’. Annual sacrifices, of a kind suitable to chthonic deities, were paid to these goddesses, and similar rites were held at an altar of the Moirai in the open air within the grove. The identification of the Sicyonian Eumenides with the Athenian Semnai Theai is sometimes regarded as a matter of historical fact,<sup>5</sup> but it is difficult to see how deities can have a ‘true’ identity as distinct from the name which their worshippers give them. What Pausanias’ testimony shows is that goddesses called

\* I am most grateful to Dr N. J. Richardson for showing me an unpublished paper on Soph. *O.C.*, which provided some of the stimulus for the present article, and for valuable comments on a draft of this. Dr Richardson would be justly indignant if anyone were to associate him with my conclusions.

<sup>1</sup> There is a thorough account of Erinyes etc. by E. Wüst in *RE* Suppl. viii. 82–166, though he tends to assume that the various names are interchangeable; so does O. Gruppe, *Griechische Mythologie und Religionsgeschichte* II (Munich, 1906), 763–8. This fault, at least, is avoided by J. E. Harrison, *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*<sup>3</sup> (Cambridge, 1922), 213–56, and L. R. Farnell, *The Cults of the Greek States* v (Oxford, 1909), 437–43. B. C. Dietrich, *Death, Fate and the Gods* (London, 1965), 91–156, is of some use as a source of references.

<sup>2</sup> I am using the word ‘cult’ loosely. In some places, including Colonus, we know only that there was a sacred site at which offerings *could* be paid, and not that they were paid regularly.

<sup>3</sup> Nor by the schol. on *Od.* 11. 271 = Androton, *FGrHist* 324 F 62, but this source may not be of any value; see F. Jacoby, *FGrHist* III B (Suppl.), i. 169 f., ii. 154 f.

<sup>4</sup> As does L. R. Farnell, *Greek Hero Cults and Ideas of Immortality* (Oxford, 1921), 333.

<sup>5</sup> E.g. by Dietrich, op. cit. (n. 1), 98 f.

Semnai Theai were worshipped at Athens and goddesses called Eumenides near Sicyon, and that the beliefs held about these goddesses in the two places were sufficiently similar for the two groups to be equated (whether by Pausanias himself or by an informant). The equation of Eumenides with Semnai Theai occurs in several other authors, as we shall see.

It is interesting that the Eumenides of Sicyon, like those of Colonus, dwelt in or near a grove. That is a surprising place to find chthonic deities, who would more naturally inhabit a cave.<sup>6</sup> The Eumenides' worshippers at Sicyon, according to Pausanias, 'use flowers instead of garlands', and the grove at Colonus, according to Sophocles, was a place of great beauty (see n. 114 below). It seems that Eumenides, besides their chthonic aspect, in which they resemble Erinyes, have a connection with the beauties of nature, in which they rather resemble nymphs.

3. Cerynea in Achaea. The evidence is Pausanias 7. 25. 7, where we read of a sanctuary of the Eumenides, said to have been founded by Orestes. Any polluted person who enters this sanctuary is driven mad. This testimony ties in neatly with that of the scholion on Soph. *O.C.* 42, as we shall see (p. 271).

4. Near Tiryns. The evidence consists of five votive tablets, dating, it seems, from the fifth to the third centuries B.C.<sup>7</sup> Three of these tablets bear inscriptions to the Eumenides, and two of these three also bear reliefs of three stately goddesses, each with a snake in one hand and a flower in the other, facing their worshippers. The snakes and flowers provide perfect confirmation of the ambivalent associations of these goddesses; we are reminded of Persephone.<sup>8</sup> On one of the other tablets, however, they bear snakes in both hands.

5. Near Cyrene. The evidence is a series of inscriptions on rocks and altars, said to date from the fifth to the third centuries B.C., recording dedications to chthonic deities, including Eumenides.<sup>9</sup>

6. Selinus in Sicily. The evidence is a dedicatory inscription from the precinct of Demeter Malophoros, resembling those near Cyrene.<sup>10</sup>

7. Thespiae in Boeotia. The evidence is a plaque inscribed *Εὐμενίδων* (*IG* vii. 1783).

8. A possible cult on Chios depends on a quite uncertain restoration in *SEG* 17. 378.

9. For a doubtful Arcadian cult see n. 15 below.

Cults of Eumenides, then, were widely scattered<sup>11</sup> – perhaps surprisingly so, considering that the name does not look particularly ancient.<sup>12</sup> Since the Eumenides,

<sup>6</sup> It is doubtful whether there was, or was believed to be, a cave near the grove at Colonus; see C. Robert, *Oidipus* 1 (Berlin, 1915), 23–31. Julius Obsequens 56 mentions a 'lucus Furiarum' (apparently in Asia Minor or the Aegean, if not fictitious), but we cannot tell the name of these 'Furies'; perhaps they too were Eumenides. Plut. *C. Gracch.* 17. 2 mentions an ἄλσος 'Ερινύων at Rome, but appears to mean the grove of Furina (cf. Cic. *ND* 3. 46).

<sup>7</sup> *IG* iv. 571, 574–5, 668; *SEG* 11. 368; A. Milchhoefer, *Mittheilungen des deutschen archäologischen Institutes in Athen* 4 (1879), 474–6; Harrison, op. cit. (n. 1), 255 f.; W. Vollgraff, *BCH* 68–9 (1944–5), 395 f.; Nilsson, *Geschichte der gr. Rel.* i.<sup>3</sup> 101. Three of the tablets have commonly been seen as evidence for a cult further west, near Argos, but Vollgraff argues reasonably against this.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Orph. fr. 197 K, where the Eumenides are ἀνθροισουργοί and daughters of Pluto and Persephone; Euphorion fr. 94 P (quoted at n. 117 below). These sources must be influenced by cult.

<sup>9</sup> *SEG* 9. 325–46; ibid. 20. 723; K. Forbes, *Philol.* 100 (1956), 235–52.

<sup>10</sup> *SEG* 17. 441 a; Forbes, art. cit. (n. 9), 242–5.

<sup>11</sup> Note also P. Derv. col. ii (see n. 45 below): worship of Eumenides, with wineless libations and sacrificial cakes, is common among μύσται.

<sup>12</sup> The word εὐμενής, which it presupposes, occurs first at Anacr. 357. 6 P, Sim. 519 fr. 35 (b) 4 P. Hom. *Hymn* 22. 7 need not be earlier; but εὐμενέτης at *Od.* 6. 185 may indicate that the absence of εὐμενής from early poetry is deceptive.

however ambivalent, are after all chthonic, it is reasonable to regard their name as more propitiatory than descriptive, but this need not mean that it arose as a euphemism or 'antiphrasis'<sup>13</sup> for some other name (such as Erinyes). In any case, it must have arisen at one particular site (probably in the Peloponnese), and it will then have been regarded as the proper name of these beings at all other sites to which the cult spread.

The list of beings which to some extent resemble Eumenides, and could be identified with them, is very long.<sup>14</sup> For present purposes, however, we need only consider the cults of Semnai Theai and Erinyes.<sup>15</sup>

### *Semnai Theai*

This hardly counts as a *name* at all, since any god or goddess could be described as *σεμνός*; it is rather an accepted way of referring to deities who are essentially nameless.<sup>16</sup> We know of two cults of Semnai Theai as such, one at Phlya in Attica (Paus. 1. 31. 4), where they shared a temple with both chthonic and Olympian deities, and another, far more important, beneath the Areopagus at Athens. Near the point on the Areopagus where trials took place, according to Pausanias (1. 28. 6),

there is a sanctuary of the goddesses whom the Athenians call Semnai, and whom Hesiod in the *Theogony* calls Erinyes. Aeschylus was the first to represent them with snakes in their hair; but in their images, and in those of such other chthonic gods as are present, there is nothing terrible. There are also a Pluto, a Hermes and an image of Earth. Those who have been acquitted on the Areopagus sacrifice here, as do both strangers and citizens on other occasions. Within the enclosure there is a tomb of Oedipus...<sup>17</sup>

Pausanias, then, identifies the Semnai Theai with the Erinyes of literature; this is common form for his period, and proves nothing about their associations in cult. Nor need the fact that there was 'nothing terrible' in their images be very significant, for even Erinyes often have 'nothing terrible' about them in painting and sculpture. Other sources, however, show that their sanctuary was thought of as a place of refuge, where they protected suppliants: this is the implication of Ar. *Knights* 1312, *Thesm.* 224; of the story of the Cylonian Conspiracy (Thuc. 1. 126, Plut. *Solon* 12); and of the oracle cited at Paus. 7. 25. 1 (see below). Oaths were also taken there,<sup>18</sup> and the Semnai Theai were invoked in prayers on behalf of Athens.<sup>19</sup> Evidently, like most Greek deities, they were benevolent when properly worshipped, though they could turn unpleasant when slighted.

From Eur. *El.* 1270–2, *I.T.* 968 f., we learn that after the trial of Orestes the Erinyes

<sup>13</sup> In general the doctrine of 'antiphrasis' looks rather artificial. The four examples constantly cited – *Εὐμενίδες*, *Εὐξείνος*, *εὐφρόνη*, *εὐάνυμος* – belong to four different semantic fields, and may well have diverse origins.

<sup>14</sup> See Wüst, art. cit. (n. 1), 86–91.

<sup>15</sup> For the Potniai see nn. 53, 128, below. The Maniai of Arcadia (Paus. 8. 34. 1–3), who pursued Orestes until he placated them by biting off his finger, have clear affinities with the Erinyes and with the Eumenides of Cerynea (see p. 271 below). At one point, indeed, Pausanias calls them Eumenides, but this probably reflects his memories of Cerynea or the fact that Orestes' pursuers were commonly so called in his day, and does not mean that Eumenides was a local cult title. Certainly the name Erinyes, which he also uses here, is due merely to 'writers on Peloponnesian antiquities'.

<sup>16</sup> Modern scholars tend to call them simply Semnae. The ellipse of the noun does occur in Greek (e.g. Diog. Laert. 1. 112), but is far from common; see Harrison, op. cit. (n. 1), 239 f.

<sup>17</sup> See also scholia on Aeschin. 1. 188, Soph. *O.C.* 489.

<sup>18</sup> Dinarch. 1. 47; cf. Dem. 23. 67 f.

<sup>19</sup> Aeschin. 1. 188; line 9 of *IG* ii.<sup>2</sup> 112 = *SIG* 181 = Tod, *GHI* ii. 144 (362/1 B.C.); hence the restoration in line 7 f. of *IG* ii.<sup>2</sup> 114 = *SIG* 180 = Tod, *GHI* ii. 146.

who were pursuing him took up residence in a cave beside the Areopagus to provide a *σεμνὸν βροτοῖσιν εὐσεβέσι χρηστήριον*.<sup>20</sup> From Dinarchus 1. 87 we learn that the Semnai Theai accepted the verdict of the Areopagus in Orestes' trial and associated themselves with the veracity of the Council in times to come.<sup>21</sup> Clearly these references belong together and add up to an account of the cult's origin;<sup>22</sup> and clearly, despite topographical difficulties (p. 274 below), Aeschylus has this account in mind (or invents it) at the end of *Eumenides*. The functions assigned to the reformed Erinyes here probably combine those of Semnai Theai with those of 'normal' Erinyes. Thus the promotion of fertility (*Eum.* 903–9, 938–47) was doubtless a function of Semnai Theai in Athenian cult, but the punishment of crime (*Eum.* 910, 927–37) need not have been.

The Eumenides of Sicyon (Paus. 2. 11. 4) and of Colonus (Soph. *O.C.* 89 f., 458) could be identified with Semnai Theai; could the Semnai Theai of Athens be called Eumenides? Pausanias was certainly right to imply that their *normal* title was Semnai Theai and nothing else, as the numerous examples of this title demonstrate;<sup>23</sup> and the comic poet Philemon is said to have distinguished between Semnai Theai and Eumenides.<sup>24</sup> By contrast, references to Semnai Theai as Eumenides, or to a cult of Eumenides at Athens, are late and mostly unimpressive;<sup>25</sup> late scholars in general tend to regard all similar divine beings as identical. It is quite unimportant that the scholiast on Soph. *O.C.* 489, for instance, talks of Eumenides when clearly referring to the cult of the Semnai Theai at Athens, since he has been encouraged to equate the two species by the text of *O.C.* itself.<sup>26</sup> More attention, however, is demanded by the oracle quoted at Paus. 7. 25. 1–2, which mentions the Areopagus and altars of the Eumenides (presumably meaning those of the Semnai Theai, as Pausanias assumes), and which was supposedly fulfilled in the time of Codrus. H. W. Parke connects the forgery of the oracle with the invasion of Cleomenes in 508 B.C.,<sup>27</sup> and, if it were really as old as this, it would be highly relevant to the question of Eumenides in Aesch. *Eum.*; but on general grounds a considerably later date will doubtless be judged more likely. It would probably be unsafe, however, to assume, at *this* stage of the discussion, that the Semnai Theai were never called Eumenides as early as the fifth century.

<sup>20</sup> Diggle's text of *El.* 1272, where I take *χρηστήριον* in apposition to the sentence rather than to *πάγον*. The word is problematic, since oracles at this site are otherwise unknown, and seem unlikely. If the text is sound, Eur. is perhaps influenced by legends of other figures, such as Amphiarus, who plunged beneath the earth to become an oracular hero.

<sup>21</sup> Also schol. on Thuc. 1. 126 (τῶν σεμνῶν θεῶν): τῶν Ἐρινύων, κατὰ ἀντίφρασιν· ὁς μετὰ τὸν Ὀρέστην οἱ Ἀθηναῖοι πλησίον τοῦ Ἀρείου πάγου ἰδρύσαντο, ἵνα πολλῆς τιμῆς τύχωσιν. Schol. ('Ulpian') on Dem. 21. 115: καὶ οἱ μὲν φασιν ὅτι διὰ τὸν Ὀρέστην ἐκεῖ καθιδρύθη..., sc. the shrine of the Eumenides (*sic*) beside the Areopagus.

<sup>22</sup> A different account is given by Diog. Laert. 1. 112: the cult was founded by Epimenides the Cretan.

<sup>23</sup> Some early examples: Ar. *Knights* 1312, *Thesm.* 224; Thuc. 1. 126; the inscriptions cited in n. 19 above; Dem. 21. 115; Aeschin. 1. 188; Dinarch. 1. 47, 64, 87, fr. VIII. 2 Conomis. Note also Lucian, *Bis Acc.* 4.

<sup>24</sup> Schol. on Soph. *O.C.* 42 = Philemon fr. 217 K.

<sup>25</sup> Apart from various scholia and entries in lexicæ note Cic. *ND* 3. 46; Plut. *Thes.* 27.

<sup>26</sup> The presence of a tomb of Oedipus (Val. Max. 5. 3. 3 as well as Paus. loc. cit.) clearly provides a link with the Eumenides of Colonus, but this evidence is hard to evaluate. Scholars are divided on whether the tomb is earlier than the legend of Oedipus' death at Colonus, and whether either is earlier than Soph. *O.C.*: see e.g. Jacoby, locc. cit. (n. 3); T. G. Rosenmeyer, *Phoenix* 6 (1952), 99 n. 30.

<sup>27</sup> *The Oracles of Zeus* (Oxford, 1967), 131–4. The argument is very speculative, and, if it were correct, I should expect to find some mention of this oracle, or of the associated legend, in other sources.

*Erinyes*

To us this is the most familiar name for chthonic goddesses more or less resembling Eumenides; but, when we look for cults of Erinyes in this form, they prove hard to find.<sup>28</sup> We do find cults of a single Erinys, or Demeter Erinys, who mated with Poseidon and gave birth to the horse Arion and/or a daughter; these are known from Thelpusa (Paus. 8. 25. 4–10 etc.) and Phigalia (Paus. 8. 42. 1–3), both in Arcadia, and, allegedly, from Tilphusa in Boeotia.<sup>29</sup> Although these cults have greatly interested scholars, their connection with the Erinyes whom we meet in literature is clearly remote, and there is little to be learned from them for present purposes.<sup>30</sup>

Very different are the Erinyes of Laius and Oedipus worshipped at Sparta and, it seems, on Thera (Hdt. 4. 149). Here it is the explicit link with a familiar myth that is suspicious. If the cults are historical at all,<sup>31</sup> the myth presumably gave rise to them, or at least influenced their development; in any case, they serve only to confirm the mythical associations of Erinyes for fifth-century minds. And no other cults of Erinyes seem to be attested anywhere.<sup>32</sup>

In itself the lack of cult need not mean that Erinyes were not objects of serious belief. Someone must have believed in them at some period if their presence in literature is to be accounted for; and, if their nature is such as literary sources describe, they perhaps cannot expect regular worship. Unlike most, if not all, of the beings whom the Greeks did worship, the typical Erinyes of tragedy can *only* do harm (Aesch. *Eum.* 125), so their aid cannot be invoked for any respectable purpose; Clytemnestra's offerings to them (*Eum.* 106–9) only strengthen the point, for we are not invited to admire her piety. And, since Erinyes need to be on call wherever a crime is committed or a curse is uttered, it is difficult for them to have a fixed abode where rites can be paid.

It is interesting, then, that Alcaeus (fr. 129. 13 f. L–P) imagines an Erinys as acting in real life just as she would in myth, and considers her worth invoking in a serious political context (while he shows no sign of knowing of a *cult* of Erinyes, since his prayer is uttered in a sanctuary of supernal deities).<sup>33</sup> The difficulty, however, is to find any counterpart to Alcaeus' prayer in the non-mythical literature of Athens.

<sup>28</sup> I am concerned only with cults explicitly attested. Others have been postulated on the basis of myths linking Orestes, Oedipus or the horse Arion with particular sites, but, even if this is a valid procedure, we cannot tell what name the Furies were given at these sites, nor at what period they were worshipped.

<sup>29</sup> For the evidence for the Boeotian cult see A. Schachter, *Cults of Boiotia* 1 (*BICS* Suppl. 38. 1, 1981), 164. But Schachter's tentative suggestion that it is 'only a literary invention based on a confusion between the Boiotian Telphousa and the Arcadian Thelpousa' is doubtless correct. The names of Tilphusa and Thelpusa are both found in various forms, and either, it seems, can become *Τέλφουσα* (Pfeiffer on Call. fr. 652). The schol. on Lycophron 1225 certainly does not distinguish between them, and the only source to mention Boeotia explicitly is schol. *MV* on *Il.* 23. 346, which is clearly concerned with literature, not cult. Demeter Erinys, then, will be a purely Arcadian deity, like many who seem eccentric from an Athenian viewpoint.

<sup>30</sup> If we knew anything about the Erinys detected on two Linear B tablets (KN 200, 208), she would doubtless prove equally unhelpful.

<sup>31</sup> The Theran cult is sometimes said to receive confirmation from *IG* xii. 3. 367, but the reading looks very uncertain.

<sup>32</sup> Some believe in a cult on Mount Cithaeron, but this rests purely on ps.-Plut. *de Fluviiis* 2. 3, for the authority of which see D. L. Page, *Corinna* (London, 1953), 22.

<sup>33</sup> The famous saying of Heraclitus (fr. 94) that, if the sun transgresses his limits, the Erinyes will find him out, is probably not evidence for any literal (still less popular) belief. P. Derv. frs. A and B (see n. 45 below) seem to deal in esoteric doctrines derived from Heraclitus and the poets.

Aristophanes, for instance, mentions an Erinyes only twice; one instance (*Lys.* 811) is figurative, and the other (*Plut.* 423, ἴσως Ἐρινύς ἐστιν ἐκ τραγωδίας) shows clearly what he feels her province to be. From the orators, despite their frequent concern with vengeance and punishment, the word Erinyes is entirely absent; we do find vague ἀλιτῆριοι and προστρόπαιοι in Antiphon's third *Tetralogy* (α 3–4, β 8, γ 7, δ 10), but against this can be set Aeschylus. 1. 190, μὴ γὰρ οἴεσθε... τοὺς ἡσεβηκότας, καθάπερ ἐν ταῖς τραγωδίαις, Ποινὰς ἐλαύνειν καὶ κολάζειν δασὶν ἡμμέναις.<sup>34</sup> In the Platonic corpus there is only *Ep.* 8. 357a, where the ξενικαὶ Ἐρινύες, in a real-life context, merely convict the forger of incompetence. Still more significant, perhaps, is the virtual absence of Erinyes from Attic *defixiones*,<sup>35</sup> for, if men believed in such creatures at all, it is here that we might most expect to find them; and this reasoning is confirmed by their frequent presence in *defixiones* from Cyprus,<sup>36</sup> where old beliefs evidently lingered. Thus, while there is very little evidence for the *worship* of Erinyes, as we know them from literature, at any time or place, it seems possible to make a distinction in terms of popular belief between Classical Athens on the one hand and Alcaeus' Lesbos, together with the Cyprus of later centuries, on the other. It is true that none of the Athenian evidence is earlier than the late fifth century, and it may be that an Antiphon writing in Aeschylus' day would have talked of Erinyes. But a superstitious usage must take time to die out, and I should guess that even in Aeschylus' day belief in Erinyes, if not dead, was at least moribund.<sup>37</sup>

We have now seen that, to the mind of a fifth-century Athenian, Eumenides and Semnai Theai would have been creatures of local cult and popular belief, while Erinyes would have been mainly, if not exclusively, creatures of myth and literature. In their nature Semnai Theai, at least, were very different from Erinyes, being not particularly malevolent and not particularly concerned with vengeance and punishment. The Eumenides' association with flowers seems peculiar to them, but the indications are that in other respects they would have aligned themselves with Semnai Theai (we shall find further confirmation of this in Section IV).<sup>38</sup> Nevertheless, there are some places in Greek literature (and more in Roman) where Eumenides and Erinyes are regarded as identical. The origin of the identification will be discussed in the next section.

## II. EURIPIDES' *ORESTES*

In the manuscript text of this play the creatures pursuing Orestes are referred to four times as Eumenides (38, 321, 836, 1650) and three times as Erinyes (238, 264, 582; the word occurs also at 1389). Only at line 38 (to be considered below) is any reason given for preferring one name to the other. Euripides shows no sign of being influenced

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Timaeus, *FGH Hist* 566 F 55; *Plut.* *Dion* 55. 1; *Prop.* 2. 20. 29; Harrison, *op. cit.* (n. 1), 231; L. Moulinier, *Le pur et l'impur dans la pensée des Grecs* (Paris, 1952), 259–70; R. Parker, *Miasma* (Oxford, 1983), 14, 104–9. Perhaps superstition declined from Antiphon's time to that of Aeschylus; but the world of the *Tetralogies* is fairly artificial, and even there Antiphon avoids the word Erinyes (probably too literary or melodramatic) and does not suggest that the avenging spirits have a very solid existence.

<sup>35</sup> I could have missed instances, but the only one known to me is *IG* iii. 3 Suppl. 108 (3rd or 2nd century B.C.). And this is no true exception, since the inscription is in verse, with literary pretensions (the same is true of Alcaeus' prayer, but the early date of this makes mere literary convention less likely).

<sup>36</sup> A. Audollent, *Defixionum tabellae* (Paris, 1904), 462.

<sup>37</sup> I have argued at *JHS* 103 (1983), 26, that some aspects, at least, of Aeschylus' presentation of the Erinyes reflect dramatic needs rather than popular belief.

<sup>38</sup> Thus, of the scholars cited in n. 1, Harrison and Farnell are right to stress the differences between the various species, while Gruppe, Wüst and Dietrich are wrong to play them down.

by the legend associated with Aeschylus, that the Erinyes were renamed Eumenides when they had *ceased* to pursue Orestes. This is especially clear at 1648–52, where the prophecy of Orestes' trial is presumably included in deference to Aeschylus (cf. n. 80 below), and where the Furies *during* the trial are referred to as Eumenides.

Whatever the truth may be concerning the legend of the change of name, we possess no earlier example of Eumenides used as a mere *synonym* for Erinyes (unless *PMG* fr. adesp. 925 or the Derveni text is earlier; see below). This cannot be fortuitous, for, to say nothing of examples in Homer and Hesiod, the word *Ἐρινύες* in the plural<sup>39</sup> occurs some nine times in Aeschylus, five times in plays of Sophocles other than *O.C.*, and thirteen times in plays of Euripides other than *Or.*<sup>40</sup> Particularly striking is the contrast between *Or.* and *I.T.*, which is dated to about 414 (six years before *Or.*),<sup>41</sup> and in which the word *Ἐρινύες* occurs no less than nine times,<sup>42</sup> again with reference to the pursuit of Orestes. We must conclude that the use of *Εὐμενίδες* which we find in *Or.* was in some sense not available before about 414; if it had occurred at all, it had not occurred in any work which influenced Euripides. It is possible, indeed, that *Or.* was the first work in which Erinyes and Eumenides were equated and that the idea was Euripides' own, though the relative lack of explanation in the text perhaps tells against this. The alternative is to suppose that Euripides was influenced by some work which appeared between 414 and 408.

The equation of two sets of beings who seem to have distinct identities elsewhere need cause us no great surprise when we remember that Euripides was capable, for instance, of equating Curetes with Corybantes at *Bacch.* 120–34. As Dodds remarks *ad loc.*, 'such "syncretism" is characteristic of the late fifth century, when people began trying to reduce to order the chaos of old cults and myths'.<sup>43</sup>

After 408, however, we find several more examples. I shall argue in Section IV that Soph. *O.C.* 42 and 486 should not be classed among these; but it is probable that *PMG* fr. adesp. 925 (e) 9 (from a poem sometimes assigned to Timotheus) should be so classed, for the presence of Eumenides in the context of Odysseus' visit to the Underworld can best be accounted for if the Eumenides are Erinyes.<sup>44</sup> In the Derveni Papyrus<sup>45</sup> both names occur, perhaps referring to the same beings. Demosthenes (23. 66) calls the Furies at Orestes' trial Eumenides; so, probably, did Menippus, who seems to have parodied the story;<sup>46</sup> and Pausanias (8. 34. 1), discussing the Arcadian Maniai (see n. 15 above), treats Eumenides as the *vox propria* for Orestes' pursuers.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>39</sup> I have counted only instances in the plural because the singular of *Εὐμενίδες* seems not to occur in Greek. Examples in Latin, such as Lucan l. 576, will be mere solecisms.

<sup>40</sup> It does not occur in *Bacch.* and *I.A.*, the two plays later than *Or.*

<sup>41</sup> A. M. Dale, *Euripides: Helen* (Oxford, 1967), xxiv–xxviii.

<sup>42</sup> *I.T.* 79, 294, 299, 931, 941, 963, 970, 1439, 1456. Eur. seems particularly in need of a synonym for *Ἐρινύες* at 944, where, having just used the word at 941 and feeling that *variatio* is required, he incongruously resorts to calling them *ταῖς ἀνωγύμοις θεαῖς*.

<sup>43</sup> Some other examples: *Hel.* 1301–68 (see Dale and Kannicht *ad loc.*), *Phoen.* 109 f., 685 f., *Bacch.* 275 f., Soph. *Phil.* 391–402.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. e.g. Virgil, *Aen.* 6. 280, 375.

<sup>45</sup> *ZPE* 47 (1982), following p. 300; brought to my notice at a late stage by M. L. West, *The Orphic Poems* (Oxford, 1983). West, who dates the text to the early fourth century (pp. 81 f.), assumes (p. 78) that the Erinyes (fr. A and B) are the same as the Eumenides (col. ii), though the published fragments, at least, do not make this certain. It must anyway be significant that the name is Erinyes in the context of crime and punishment, Eumenides in the context of cult.

<sup>46</sup> J.-P. Cèbe, *Varron, Satires ménippées* iv (Rome, 1977), 545. In Varro's satire *Eumenides* the Eumenides were evidently Furiae causing madness.

<sup>47</sup> The equation does not become invariable in Greek, however; note Orph. *Hymns* 69 (to the Erinyes) and 70 (to the Eumenides).

In Roman literature, where learned variation and syncretism are almost universal, any identification which has been made once tends to be made regularly, so it is not surprising that Virgil, for instance, evidently regards Erinyes, Eumenides, Furiae and Dirae as interchangeable in all contexts.<sup>48</sup> In this he had some predecessors in Latin,<sup>49</sup> and many followers; and scholiasts and lexicographers in both languages frequently use the various names as glosses for one another.

To return to the *Orestes*, the first instance of *Εὐμενίδες* at 38 is somewhat problematic:

... τὸ μητρὸς δ' αἵμά νιν τροχῆλατ' εἰ  
μανίαισιν· ὀνομάζειν γὰρ αἰδοῦμαι θεὰς  
*Εὐμενίδας*, αἶ τόνδ' ἑξαμυλλῶνται φόβῳ. 38

Electra, then, uses the abstract term *τὸ μητρὸς αἷμα*<sup>50</sup> because she shrinks in awe from naming the Eumenides. But how can she call them Eumenides in the same breath as saying that she shrinks from naming them? Emendations have been proposed (*δαινῶπας* Dindorf, *ποτνιαδάς* Stadtmüller), and line 38 was considered suspect by Nauck and is bracketed by di Benedetto.<sup>51</sup> The deletion, however, can hardly be right, for Electra needs to specify *what* goddesses she will not name, and the relative clause is therefore indispensable; 'I shrink in awe from naming (the) goddesses' would make no sense by itself in a context where no goddesses have been mentioned.

Murray (followed by Chapoutier) thought he could solve the problem by writing *εὐμενίδας* with a small ε, but, as di Benedetto points out, there is no such word in Greek, and, if there were, it could hardly be used here, of the same beings who will be called *Εὐμενίδες* as a proper name in other places (including Murray's own text of *Or.* 836, 1650). We need not suppose, however, that *ὀνομάζειν* refers to the use of any word that we would print with an initial capital. What Electra is avoiding is the *true* name of the Erinyes – the name which properly belongs to them, fully evokes their horrific nature, and is therefore of ill omen. If *Εὐμενίδες* is not such a name, and still bears some euphemistic force, Electra will be guilty of, at most, a purely formal and trivial inconsistency.<sup>52</sup> This, then, confirms our earlier conclusion, that in 408 *Εὐμενίδες* was not an established title for the Erinyes, but one that had recently come to be applied to them.<sup>53</sup>

### III. AESCHYLUS' *EUMENIDES*

The word *Εὐμενίδες* does not occur in the play as we have it. As is well known, however, an entry in Harpocration and other lexica, backed by a sentence in the play's hypothesis, asserts that Athena, having tamed the Erinyes, renamed them Eumenides, and G. Hermann believed that this happened in a passage which had dropped out

<sup>48</sup> Eumenides at *Georg.* 1. 278 (cf. *Ἐρινύες* at Hes. *Op.* 803), 4. 483, *Aen.* 4. 469 (Pentheus haunted by Eumenides, *Orestes* by Dirae), 6. 250, 280, 375.

<sup>49</sup> It is likely (though we lack direct evidence) that the Erinyes were called Eumenides in Ennius' *Eumenides* (based on Aeschylus). For Varro see n. 46 above. See also Lucil. 172, Cat. 64. 193, Cic. *ND* 3. 46.

<sup>50</sup> The analogy of *El.* 1252 f. shows that it is *τὸ μητρὸς αἷμα*, not *μανίαισιν*, that has replaced a word for 'Furies'.

<sup>51</sup> See also Wedd *ad loc.* At Eubulus fr. 64 K *ὀνομάζειν γὰρ αἰδοῦμαι θεάν* is doubtless a complete sentence, but this proves little.

<sup>52</sup> There is worse inconsistency in a similar context at *I.T.* 941–4; see n. 42 above.

<sup>53</sup> I lack space to discuss the puzzling word *ποτνιαδες*, applied to the Eumenides at *Or.* 318, to frenzied mares at *Phoen.* 1124, and to Bacchantes at *Bacch.* 664. I doubt, however, whether it justifies the claim sometimes made, that Potniades or Potniai was a cult title of Erinyes or Eumenides (cf. n. 128 below).



after line 1027.<sup>54</sup> Hermann's theory has been accepted by Wilamowitz<sup>55</sup> and many others, though there have been several dissenters.<sup>56</sup>

### *The play's title*

Does the title *Eumenides* provide evidence for Hermann's theory?<sup>57</sup> No doubt the Greek dramatists referred to their own plays by titles, and certainly there must always have been titles to enter in the didascaliae. These will often have corresponded to the titles known to us; it is unlikely, for instance, that anyone ever called Eur. *Med.* anything but *Μήδεια*. It is certain, however, that not all the titles we have can go back to the dramatists or the didascaliae, for sometimes we have two for one play,<sup>58</sup> no one supposes that the dramatists wrote *Φρύγες ἢ Ἐκτορος Λύτρα* or *Πενθεύς ἢ Βάκχαι* at the top of their autographs. Evidently these alternatives go back to a period at which titles were not immutably fixed; and it is reasonable to suppose that at this period there existed other titles which were not passed down to later generations. This is confirmed by the evidence of Aristophanes, who uses *ὁ σώφρων τε χῶ καταπύγων* (*Clouds* 529) to refer to the play which we know as *Δαιταλῆς*, and *Ὁρέστεια* (*Frogs* 1124) to refer to the play which we know as *Χοηφόροι*;<sup>59</sup> conversely the title *Ἐπὶ Θήβας*, which he uses at *Frogs* 1021, did become canonical, but cannot have been conferred by Aeschylus, since the name *Θήβαι* does not occur in the play.<sup>60</sup> Clearly, then, as might be expected at a time when plays were thought of in terms of performance and written texts were rarely consulted,<sup>61</sup> a play could be referred to by whatever title seemed convenient; a person who thought of it as being about Pentheus, for instance, would call it *Πενθεύς*, while one who thought of it as being about Bacchants would call it *Βάκχαι*.

This is why the title of a Greek play is never whimsical or paradoxical, or designed to tell us anything interesting;<sup>62</sup> it is simply a label to identify the play being talked about. At first sight the obvious title for either *Cho.* or *Eum.* would be *Ὁρέστης*, but

<sup>54</sup> Besides his edition of Aesch. see his *Opuscula* II (Leipzig, 1827), 132–4; *ibid.* VI (1835), 2. 117–23.

<sup>55</sup> *Aischylos: Interpretationen* (Berlin, 1914), 228 f.

<sup>56</sup> As well as several editors (e.g. Paley, Verrall, Sidgwick, Blass, Smyth, Headlam-Thomson) see C. O. [K. O.] Müller, *Dissertations on the Eumenides of Aeschylus*<sup>2</sup> (trans., London, 1853), 174 n. 3; *id.*, *Anhang* (Göttingen, 1834), 26–9; C. Robert, *Hermes* 38 (1903), 634–7; Harrison, *op. cit.* (n. 1), 252 f.; C. W. Macleod, *Maia* 27 (1975), 201 = *Collected Essays* (Oxford, 1983), 41; O. Taplin, *The Stagecraft of Aeschylus* (Oxford, 1977), 412 n. 2. See also n. 86 below.

<sup>57</sup> As he claimed at *Opusc.* vi. 2. 121.

<sup>58</sup> E. Nachmanson, *Der griechische Buchtitel* (Göteborg, 1941), 6 f.; R. L. Hunter, *Eubulus: The Fragments* (Cambridge, 1983), 146–8.

<sup>59</sup> Aesch. is told to recite the prologue from the *Ὁρέστεια*, and replies unhesitatingly with the beginning of *Cho.*; so *Ὁρέστεια* should mean *Cho.*, and not, as the schol. thinks, the trilogy or tetralogy. Then at Ar. *Thesm.* 135 *Λυκούργια* will mean simply *Edonoi* ('Mnesilochus' is about to quote a single passage from a single play); in *IG* ii. 2 3091 (= *TrGF* i DID B 5) the *Τηλέφεια* of Soph. will be simply *Mysoi* or *Telephus* (no tetralogy by Soph. is otherwise attested); and in Aristotle's edition of the Didascaliae the *Οιδιπόδεια* of Meletus (*TrGF* i 47 MELETUS I 1) will perhaps be a single play also. Alexandrian scholars, however, mistook *Ὁρέστεια* and *Λυκούργια* in Ar. for names of trilogies or tetralogies, and also gave the name *Λυκούργεια* to a tetralogy by Polyphrasmon (*TrGF* i DID C 4) on the analogy of these. Or so it seems to me; cf. now B. M. W. Knox *et al.* in *Sophocle (Entretiens Fond. Hardt* 29, 1983), 224 f.

<sup>60</sup> A. W. Verrall, *The Seven Against Thebes of Aeschylus* (London, 1887), xvi–xviii, xxxiii. Verrall's argument seems conclusive on this point, whatever Aeschylus' reason may have been for omitting the name from the text.

<sup>61</sup> Taplin, *op. cit.* (n. 56), 12–18.

<sup>62</sup> A. E. Haigh, *The Tragic Drama of the Greeks* (Oxford, 1896), 395–402.

a title applicable to two plays cannot unambiguously be applied to either.<sup>63</sup> *Cho.* presents the added problem that its Chorus has no distinct identity or nationality; hence Aristophanes calls the play *Ῥρέστεια* (presumably because it covers the same ground as the *Oresteia* of Stesichorus) and others called it *Χοηφόροι* after the Chorus's occupation when first seen. *Eum.*, on the other hand, has a highly distinctive Chorus, and there is no difficulty about calling the play after it. What no one would do is to call the play after a name granted to its Chorus some twenty lines from the end; for, however important the renaming might be, no one could expect such a title to be recognised. It follows that, whether Hermann's theory is otherwise correct or not, the title was assigned by someone who regarded *Εὐμενίδες* as a simple synonym for *Ἐρινύες*, as it is in Eur. *Or.*, and considered that the Chorus consisted of Eumenides throughout the play.<sup>64</sup> It cannot, then, have been assigned much earlier than 408. When it became established, however, scholars inserted the title even into the didascalia (see hyp. *Ag.*), as they did with *Ἑπτα ἐπὶ Θήβας*.

It may seem curious that the title should take so little account of the play's text, but here again *Ἑπτα ἐπὶ Θήβας* provides a close parallel. The Queen in *Persae* is called *Ἄτροσσα* in the *dramatis personae* list and the scholia, even though the name is not found in the play. The *dramatis personae* list of *Eum.* refers to a *χόρος Εὐμενίδων*;<sup>65</sup> no doubt it is influenced by the play's title, but it at least shows how that title was interpreted by one reader. It is possible that euphemism played a part, as well as simple inattention to the text; perhaps actors avoided the name *Erinyes* rather as they avoid *Macbeth*.

What the title does provide is a reason why the information on the renaming of the Erinyes might, if untrue, have been invented. The next step, therefore, is to take a close look at the sources of this information.

#### *Harpocration and the hypothesis*

Harpocration was active in the second century A.D.<sup>66</sup> His *Lexicon to the Orators* preserves useful information on various matters, but he is no great expert on tragedy, and is hardly likely to have read any plays of Aeschylus.<sup>67</sup> His main source was Didymus, who presumably *had* read Aeschylus,<sup>68</sup> but this does not take us far. The relevant entry reads as follows (Dindorf's text):

*Εὐμενίδες: Δημοσθένης ἐν τῷ κατ' Ἀριστοκράτους.<sup>69</sup> Αἰσχύλος ἐν Εὐμενίσιν εἰπὼν τὰ περὶ τὴν κρίσιν τὴν Ῥρέστου φησὶν ὡς ἡ Ἀθηνᾶ πρᾶννασα τὰς Ἐρινύας ὥστε μὴ χαλεπῶς ἔχειν πρὸς τὸν Ῥρέστην Εὐμενίδας ἀνόμασεν. εἰσὶ δὲ Ἀληκτώ, Μέγαιρα, Τισιφὼν.*

<sup>63</sup> Admittedly there is no consistent principle at work here. The different plays about Prometheus were distinguished by epithets (M. L. West, *JHS* 99 [1979], 131), and each of the titles *Δαναΐδες* and *Λυκούργος* was arbitrarily assigned to one of at least two plays which could have borne it. But, if titles were assigned as haphazardly as I have argued, no consistent principle is to be expected.

<sup>64</sup> Macleod, loc. cit. (n. 56), while rejecting Hermann's theory, claims that the title 'indicates the meaning of the whole conclusion of the trilogy, the reconciliation of the Erinyes'. We can be sure that no one would have conferred such a title for such a purpose – least of all Aesch., who presumably felt that the play's meaning was sufficiently indicated in the play itself.

<sup>65</sup> Schol. M on *Eum.* 761 also refers to the Chorus as Eumenides (while other scholia refer correctly to Erinyes).

<sup>66</sup> For the date see E. G. Turner, *JEA* 38 (1952), 92; B. Hemmerdinger, *REG* 72 (1959), 107–9. For other information about him see H. Schultz in *RE* vii. 2. 2412–16.

<sup>67</sup> He is cited as a source for six fragments by H. J. Mette, *Die Fragmente der Tragödien des Aischylos* (Berlin, 1959), 276 f.

<sup>68</sup> It is uncertain whether Didymus wrote a commentary on Aesch.; see (in favour) A. Wartelle, *Histoire du texte d'Eschyle dans l'antiquité* (Paris, 1971), 185–95. In any case he did not always make good use of his reading; see S. West, *CQ* n.s. 20 (1970), 288–96.

<sup>69</sup> Dem. 23. 66.

This is repeated almost verbatim in Photius' *Lexicon*<sup>70</sup> and the *Suda*.

The hypothesis of *Eum.* reads as follows (the text of M):

Ἀριστοφ(άνους) γραμματικοῦ) ἡ ὑπόθεσις  
Ὀρέστης ἐν Δελφοῖς περιεχόμενος ὑπὸ τῶν Ἐρινύων βουλῇ Ἀπόλλωνος παρεγένετο εἰς  
Ἀθήνας εἰς τὸ ἱερὸν τῆς Ἀθηνᾶς ἧς βουλῇ νικήσας κατήλθεν εἰς Ἄργος. τὰς δὲ  
Ἐρινύας πραῖνας προσηγόρευσεν Εὐμενίδας. παρ' οὐδετέρῳ κείται ἡ μυθοποιία.

This is followed by the *dramatis personae* list.

In the sentence in which we are interested, where M reads *πραῖνας*,<sup>71</sup> EFG read *πραῖνούσας*; and Triclinius understandably rewrites the sentence to read *τὰς δὲ Ἐρινύας πραείας γινόμενας κατ' εὐφημισμὸν προσηγόρευσεν Εὐμενίδας*. However, the use of *πραῖνειν* in both Harpocration and the hypothesis shows that the two texts are related; and it is unreasonable to doubt<sup>72</sup> that the hypothesis originally said what Harpocration says, that Athena, having tamed the Erinyes, named them (or addressed them as) Eumenides. Most editors accordingly follow Hermann in restoring *πραῖνασα* in the hypothesis; this is doubtless correct, but it does not suffice to give a plausible text, since the subject, Athena, would need to be expressed. Presumably something has fallen out – either *Ἀθηνᾶ* or a whole sentence of which she was the expressed subject.

If the two texts are related, this could well mean that Harpocration derived his information from the hypothesis,<sup>73</sup> evidently in a fuller form than that of our manuscripts. Not everything in the relevant part of his entry, however, could have stood in a remotely competent hypothesis, for the words *ὥστε μὴ χαλεπῶς ἔχειν πρὸς τὸν Ὀρέστην* not only are wrong (Athena tamed the Erinyes to appease their anger against Athens, not against Orestes),<sup>74</sup> but would be quite obviously wrong if they stood after *κατήλθεν εἰς Ἄργος*. But that does not prove that the essential information about the renaming was not taken from the hypothesis; and in that case it could be derived from Aristophanes of Byzantium, who has a high reputation and whom we might be reluctant to disbelieve. The sentence *τὰς δὲ Ἐρινύας . . . Εὐμενίδας* does not, after all, look like an interpolation, since any synopsis of the play would have to include events after Orestes' departure.<sup>75</sup>

But what are the credentials of the hypothesis as a whole? It is attributed by M to Aristophanes of Byzantium, and it contains one sentence – *παρ' οὐδετέρῳ κείται ἡ μυθοποιία* – which is considered characteristic of him. The synopsis of the play, however, is not exactly impressive. The words *εἰς Ἀθήνας εἰς τὸ ἱερὸν τῆς Ἀθηνᾶς* are clumsy, as is the repetition of *βουλῇ* with genitive; and one could think of better

<sup>70</sup> For some reason the entry appears in Porson's and Hermann's editions but not in Naber's.

<sup>71</sup> Not *Εὐμενίδες πραῖνας*, as is claimed by O. Smith, *Scholia in Aeschylum* 1 (Leipzig, 1976), 42 (I have checked the facsimile). I have relied, however, on Smith's reports of the other manuscripts.

<sup>72</sup> As do A. W. Verrall, *The 'Eumenides' of Aeschylus* (London, 1908), xxxvi f.; Harrison, *op. cit.* (n. 1), 253. It is true that the schol. on Soph. *O.C.* 42 puts the placating and renaming of the Erinyes after Orestes' return to the Peloponnese (see p. 271 below), and in theory M's text of hyp. *Eum.* could be referring to this, in complete defiance of the play. But it is incredible that (as Harrison seems to believe) a misunderstanding of the hypothesis could have fortuitously led Harpocration to the *correct* statement that the Erinyes were placated by Athena.

<sup>73</sup> So Wilamowitz, *loc. cit.* (n. 55), as well as Harrison.

<sup>74</sup> Cf. Verrall, *loc. cit.* (n. 72). There seems to be no authority for Page's omission of *πρὸς τὸν Ὀρέστην* in his *app. crit.* on *Eum.* 1027. Against the extraordinary claim of Robert, *art. cit.* (n. 56), that Harpocration *accurately* reports the contents of a lacuna in *Eum.*, see O. Hense, *RhM* n.F. 59 (1904), 176 f.

<sup>75</sup> The argument is not impregnable, since our sentence could have replaced one which merely said 'Athena placated the Erinyes'. And cf. the 'Dicaearchan' hyp. I Eur. *Andr.*, which ends with a false statement generally considered spurious.

ways of describing the outcome of the trial than ἡς βουλῇ νικήσας. But above all, how are we to take the present participle περιεχόμενος? How can Orestes possibly have arrived at Athens while being surrounded by the Erinyes at Delphi? If the writer intended to convey 'having been surrounded and being still surrounded', he was inaccurate (since the 'surrounding' does not begin at Delphi, and since Orestes reaches Athens ahead of the Furies) as well as ungrammatical. More probably he began the sentence with the intention of writing something like ὑπὸ Ἀπόλλωνος ἐπέμφθη εἰς Ἀθήνας, and changed his mind as he wrote. Can this really be the work of so admired a scholar as Aristophanes?

In an attempt to answer that question I have investigated all the dramatic synopses that might be considered Aristophanic. The details will have to wait for another occasion; my conclusion, however, is that the whole corpus is, for whatever reason, hopelessly unreliable. Out of some 14 candidates, not one synopsis is faultless, and there is at most a mere handful<sup>76</sup> that one might wish to assign to a competent Hellenistic scholar.<sup>77</sup>

Supposing that Hermann's theory is wrong and that the Erinyes were not renamed Eumenides in *Eum.*, where could the idea have come from? We must now consider another piece of evidence, the scholion on Soph. *O.C.* 42, part of which, referring to the Eumenides, reads as follows (de Marco's text):

ἔνιοι δὲ μεταβαλεῖν αὐτάς φασι τὸ ὄνομα ἐπὶ Ὁρέστη· τότε γὰρ πρῶτον Εὐμενίδας κληθῆναι, εὐμενεῖς αὐτῷ γενομένης κριθέντι νικᾶν παρ' Ἀθηναίοις καὶ ὀλοκαυστῶσαντι αὐταῖς ὄν μέλαιναν ἐν Καρυνείᾳ τῆς Πελοποννήσου.<sup>78</sup>

Now "ἔνιοι" evidently refers to some writer who conflated an Athenian legend concerning Orestes' trial with an Achaean legend concerning his holocaust of a black sheep.<sup>79</sup> The Athenian legend must be dependent on Aeschylus if Jacoby is right that the trial was Aeschylus' invention;<sup>80</sup> but the fact that the renaming of the Furies follows the holocaust at Cerynea implies that it belongs to the Achaean legend.<sup>81</sup> And we can be certain that that implication is valid, since we know from Pausanias (p. 261 above) of a cult of the Eumenides at Cerynea, supposedly founded by Orestes.

This does not in itself prove that the renaming did not occur in *Eum.*, since Aeschylus too could have known the Achaean legend, and he could have transferred the motif of the renaming from Cerynea to Athens (the whole tradition that the Furies were pacified may be derived from Peloponnesian cults). If this is not so, however, the evidence of the scholion will account as neatly as we could wish for the mistake made by the source of Harpocration and the hypothesis. Aeschylus wrote a work in which Orestes was put on trial and the Furies were pacified, and which came to be called *Eumenides*. "ἔνιοι" wrote a work in which Orestes was put on trial and the Furies were pacified and renamed Eumenides. What could be more natural than to confuse the two works?

<sup>76</sup> Eur. II *Alc.*, II *Med.*, II *Or.*, II *Bacch.*

<sup>77</sup> Cf. the convincing demonstration by J. Rusten, *GRBS* 23 (1982), 357–67, that the 'Dicae-archan' hypotheses were falsely attributed in antiquity.

<sup>78</sup> This information is repeated in the Suda s.v. *Εὐμενίδες*.

<sup>79</sup> For similar conflations see Eur. *El.* 1254–75, *I.T.* 940–82, *Or.* 1643–52; Paus. 8. 34. 4.

<sup>80</sup> *FGrHist* III b (Suppl.) i. 24 f., ii. 20–9. Admittedly Jacoby's argument, if I rightly understand it, does not really amount to much, so it remains possible in theory that "ἔνιοι" preceded and influenced Aesch. But I think it most unlikely; the conflation of traditions looks Euripidean or later. The usage seen in Eur. *Or.* could be derived from vague memories of the Cerynean legend, but could equally be independent of it.

<sup>81</sup> The only other text known to me which mentions the change of name is the schol. on Aeschin. 1. 188: κληθῆναι δὲ Εὐμενίδας ἐπ' Ὁρέστου, πρότερον Ἐρινύας καλουμένας.

However much we may discredit our sources, it will remain possible that they are telling us the truth. It remains, therefore, to look without prejudice at the text of the play.

*Hermann's lacuna*

Athena's speech at *Eum.* 1021–31 reads as follows (Page's text, except for the crucial lines 1026–8, where I follow the manuscripts and omit all punctuation):

αἰνῶ τε μύθους τῶνδε τῶν κατευγμάτων	1021
πέμψω τε φέγγει λαμπάδων σελασφόρων	
εἰς τοὺς ἔνερθε καὶ κάτω χθονὸς τόπους	
ξὺν προσπόλοισιν αἶτε φρουροῦσιν βρέτας	
τοῦμόν δικαίως· ὄμμα γὰρ πάσης χθονὸς	1025
Θησῆδος ἐξίκοιτ' ἂν εὐκλεῆς λόχος	
παίδων γυναικῶν καὶ στόλος πρεσβυτίδων	
φοινικοβάπτοις ἐνδυτοῖς <sup>82</sup> ἐσθήμασι	
τιμᾶτε, καὶ τὸ φέγγος ὀρμάσθω πυρός,	
ὅπως ἂν εὐφρων ᾗδ' ὀμιλία χθονὸς	1030
τὸ λοιπὸν εὐάνδροισι συμφοραῖς πρέπη.	

This is the only spoken passage after 915, and it not only bristles with internal problems (not all of which will be considered below) but is difficult to account for in formal terms as a whole. It does not contribute to any epirrhematic structure, but it seems too short to count by itself as a section of the play, or even a subsection of the exodos.<sup>83</sup> In content it does little more than repeat what Athena has just said at 1003–13. I have wondered, therefore, whether it might be spurious, though it would not be easy to explain the interpolator's motive.<sup>84</sup> From now on, however, I shall work on the assumption that the lines (or most of them) are Aeschylean.

Apart from his desire to find a place for the Eumenides, Hermann gave three reasons for postulating a lacuna after 1027 (I give them in my order, not his).<sup>85</sup>

1. After the females of 1027 we require some mention of males; Hermann compared *παρ' ἀνδρῶν καὶ γυναικείων στόλων* at 856. This seems doubtful. Line 856 referred to worshippers in times to come, whereas the present context, or as much of it as is immediately intelligible (1022–5, 1029–31), refers to a procession that is being ordered now. Nor is the insertion of the males easy to achieve in practice. If *παίδων* means 'children' of either sex, then 'children, women, old women, men' make an odd sequence. Hermann in fact supposed that *παίδων* meant 'girls' and that the sequence was 'girls, women, old women, boys, men, old men', but this is a long and pedantic list; it is still odd for females to precede males;<sup>86</sup> and, if *παίδων* means 'girls', how were the boys designated?

2. The sentence governed by *τιμᾶτε*, wherever it begins, is not introduced by a connecting particle. This does not seem very serious; Müller cites *Cho.* 983, and

<sup>82</sup> *ἐνδυτῶν* Hartung, *ἐνδυτοῦς* Murray? (Murray's *app. crit.* refers to W. Headlam, *JHS* 26 [1906], 268, but the emendation does not appear there, nor in Headlam–Thomson).

<sup>83</sup> Taplin, *op. cit.* (n. 56), 408–10, considers that the last 'act' runs from 778 to the end; this is sensible in itself, but does not account for these isolated trimeters. I cannot forbear to point out, however, that there is a formal parallel at *Sept.* 1005–25, if my account of those lines is correct; see *CQ* n.s. 26 (1976), 206–19 (I should have mentioned *Eum.* 1021–31 on p. 212).

<sup>84</sup> J. F. Davies's edition (Dublin, 1885) places the passage before 1003; this is no improvement.

<sup>85</sup> For references see n. 54 above.

<sup>86</sup> Wecklein and Weil placed the lacuna before, not after, 1027, but 1026 and 1027 cohere together too well for this; 1027 was certainly designed (whether by Aesch. or, as I shall argue, by someone else) to follow immediately after 1026.

Macleod cites *Sept.* 675, *Soph. Ant.* 760, *El.* 1468. Indeed, the asyndeton reads more naturally than Robert's *φοινικοβάπτοις* <δ'>.<sup>87</sup>

3. 'τιμᾶτε sic nude positum.' This seems to cover two points: the lack of a nominative or vocative to show who is being addressed, and the lack of an expressed object. The former is to some extent dealt with by the parallels cited in the last paragraph, though in each of these places the address is to mere attendants, while in *Eum.* the analogous change of addressees at 1010 is heavily marked with both a nominative and a vocative.

But the lack of object is a fatal objection. *πέμψω* at 1022 is very different, for there Athena is replying to what the Chorus have just sung, and 1019 is clearly addressed to them, so *ύμᾶς* can easily be supplied. Here at 1029, if we were to 'understand *αὐτάς*' (or to read *φοινικοβάπτοις* <σφ'>, as Müller suggests), the pronoun could only be taken as referring to the women of 1027; indeed the Furies have not been explicitly mentioned anywhere in the speech. The fact that the object, if present, would have to be a noun, not a pronoun, surely proves the ellipse impossible.

The marking of Hermann's lacuna looks like a necessary measure; but is it a sufficient one? Let us look more closely at the sentence beginning with *ῥμμα γάρ*. Almost all scholars assume that *ῥμμα* is the subject, with *εὐκλεῆς λόχος κτλ.* in apposition. But who are these girls and women that they should deserve such flattery? To call the family of Agamemnon *ὀφθαλμὸν οἴκων* (*Cho.* 934), or to call the Emmenidae *Σικελίας . . . ὀφθαλμός* (Pind. *Ol.* 2. 9 f.), is a very different matter. It must surprise the Areopagites, as they listen to Athena's words, to learn that the title of *ῥμμα πάσης χθονὸς Θησῆδος* belongs, not to them, but to a band of (or at least including) mere women, and even *παῖδες*.

Again, those scholars who do not claim that the women are accompanied by men have usually taken them to be identical with the female *πρόσπολοι* of 1024; but it is difficult to believe that Athena's image was guarded by such crowds of servants as 1026 f. suggest.<sup>88</sup> On the other hand, if they are not identical with the *πρόσπολοι*, who are they?

And what of *ἐξίκοιτ' ἄν*? The optative is commonly taken as equivalent to a future indicative – the women 'will arrive' at their destination – but no parallels are cited for such a usage.<sup>89</sup> And the word 'arrive' seems to require an adverb or noun to indicate the place arrived at; it is very difficult to understand, in effect, an *ἐκεῖσε* referring to the *τόπους* mentioned at 1023.

Wilamowitz took the lines rather differently, as a polite request to the women and children to emerge into the orchestra. This accounts better for the optative, but *ἐξικνεῖσθαι* does not mean 'emerge', and the third-person request makes a curious way of motivating an entry, besides being excessively courteous for a goddess addressing mortals. In any case, we do not want the women and children on stage,

<sup>87</sup> For Müller, Macleod and Robert see n. 56 above.

<sup>88</sup> But for 1026 f., one would suppose that the *πρόσπολοι* comprised only the priestess of Athena Polias and her two (?) assistants. Even if we count in, with Wilamowitz (n. 55) and Groeneboom *ad loc.*, such figures as the two Arrhephoroi, the dubious Errhephoroi, the Loutrides or Plyntrides, and the Ergastinai (and it is more than doubtful whether all these could be said to guard Athena's image), the numbers are still not impressive. For Athena's personnel see B. Jordan, *Servants of the Gods* (*Hypomnemata* 55, Göttingen, 1979), 28–36.

<sup>89</sup> In the 1st person an opt. with *ἄν* can be a polite, or emphatic, way of expressing intention, while in the 2nd or 3rd it can express a request or suggestion; see Kühner–Gerth i. 233 f. Kühner–Gerth i. 235 lists some places where an opt. with *ἄν* is parallel to a future, but even here it seems to have potential force. I have not found an instance in the 2nd or 3rd person expressing a simple prediction.

whether they are summoned at the last minute only to exit almost at once, as Wilamowitz thought, or appear at some earlier point without any clue at all in the text. There is everything to be said for Taplin's view that the only people present are Athena, the Chorus, the Areopagites, and attendants.<sup>90</sup> As for the closing lines (1032–48), I am not entirely happy with Taplin's contention (following Hermann) that they are sung by the Areopagites,<sup>91</sup> but is there any conclusive reason why they should not be sung by Athena?<sup>92</sup>

The first step in solving these problems is, I believe, to realise, with H. Lloyd-Jones,<sup>93</sup> that *ῥμμα* is not the subject of the sentence; it is the accusative of place reached which the verb so badly needs. Now, if the *ῥμμα* is a place,<sup>94</sup> that place can only be the Acropolis; and this involves a conflict with the testimony of Euripides (*El.* 1271, *I.T.* 969) and those other writers who identify the reformed Erinyes with the Semnai Theai and locate them beside the Areopagus (pp. 262 f. above). But the discrepancy must be accepted in any case, for a cave beneath the Areopagus could hardly be described, at least by one who is herself standing on the Areopagus, as *πρὸς δόμοις Ἐρεχθέως* (855). Also, if the procession were not going to the Acropolis, it would be difficult to account for the mention of Athena's *πρόσπολοι*; while, if it is, we may suppose that these priestesses will join the procession as it nears its destination, to show the way to a cave which is under their protection. The Areopagus and the Acropolis are not far apart, after all,<sup>95</sup> and it seems that Aeschylus has taken a slight liberty with topographical fact in order to bring the cult of the reformed Erinyes close to that of Athena Polias.<sup>96</sup>

The second step is to realise that *ἐξίκοιτ' ἄν* must be a polite request addressed to the only *λόχος* that could merit such deference from Athena, namely the Furies.<sup>97</sup>

<sup>90</sup> Taplin, *op. cit.* (n. 56), 410–15. Certainly *πολισσοῦχοι παῖδες Κραναοῦ* (1010 f.) can refer to no one but the Areopagites. Several attendants must enter before 1003 with torches and sacrificial animals (the *σφάγια* of 1007 are now protected; see *JHS* 102 [1982], 31 n. 31), and I take *τῶνδε προπομπῶν* (1006) to refer to them (rather than the Areopagites, as Taplin thinks); they will retain their torches throughout. Areopagites and attendants are here for a reason, and in time for the start of Athena's instructions; it would be a different matter to have women and children drifting on belatedly, merely in order to exit in the procession.

<sup>91</sup> The Areopagites have been silent since their arrival at 566 and are to all appearances extras, so it would be surprising if they suddenly turned out to be a chorus (the children in *Eur. Supp.* could be compared, but Euripides' boy singers seem in general exempt from normal rules of dramatic economy). Also, if they are the only Athenians present (apart from attendants), and if we rule out 'audience participation' (Taplin 129–34, 394 f.), who are the *χωρῖται* whom they address at 1035, 1039, 1042 and 1047?

<sup>92</sup> Athena obviously has the authority to issue instructions to citizens (Areopagites) and Furies and to reveal the dispensations of Zeus and Moira. For *Παλλάδος ἄστοις* (1045) in her mouth – more forcible here than 'my citizens' (862) would be – cf. *Sept. 7, P.V.* 296, 506; *Il.* 8. 22, 470; *Eur. Hel.* 1667. If we class the song as a monody, it will perhaps be the only authentic example in Aesch. (but note Hera's lyric hexameters in fr. 355 M); I wonder, however, whether a 'monody' is a more serious anomaly than a subsidiary chorus, for, given the uncertainties surrounding *Supp.* 1018–73, we now face the prospect of eliminating subsidiary choruses from the work of Aesch. (and Soph.) altogether.

<sup>93</sup> *The Eumenides by Aeschylus* (Englewood Cliffs, 1970), 72.

<sup>94</sup> *Cf. Eur. Phoen.* 802, *Ἀρτέμιδος χιονοτρόφον ῥμμα Κιθαιρών.*

<sup>95</sup> In fact the precinct of the Semnai Theai seems to have been between the two hills (cf. Paus. 1. 28. 7 with Val. Max. 5. 3. 3). Some claim that the exact spot can be identified, e.g. Robert, *op. cit.* (n. 6), 42; W. Judeich, *Topographie von Athen*<sup>2</sup> (Munich, 1931), 300.

<sup>96</sup> Cf. 833 (*ξυνοικήτωρ ἐμοί*), 916. It is also necessary to believe that the goal of the procession is the Acropolis if we are to accept Headlam's suggestion of a parallel with the Panathenaic procession (*art. cit.* [n. 82], 268–77; Headlam–Thomson on 1028–32). This is certainly one way to account for the red robes of 1028 (about which I have no private theories).

<sup>97</sup> For *λόχος* of the Erinyes cf. 46; for *εὐκλής* cf. *Κλυτά* at *Cho.* 650.

So line 1027 is interpolated. The women and children have indeed caused nothing but trouble; their presence in the text has proved unaccountable whether or not they are accompanied by men, whether or not they are identical with the *πρόσπολοι*, whether or not they are seen in the theatre. I suppose that the line was inserted after one or more lines following 1026 had dropped out, by someone who felt, no doubt rightly, that *λόχος* required a genitive.

We now have: '(My *πρόσπολοι* will take part;) for the glorious band <of...> is to arrive, if it pleases, at the eye of the whole land of Theseus.' The third-person request may still sound a little odd, and we could perhaps obtain more natural Greek by taking a third step and reading *ἐξίκοισθ' ἄν* ('you are to arrive, if you please, a glorious band...');<sup>98</sup> this seems desirable but not essential.

It is time to return to the Eumenides. We have seen that Hermann's lacuna is real enough, but also that the lines on either side of it are concerned with arrangements for the procession. So it is not obvious that the renaming of the Furies will fit into this context.<sup>99</sup> A possible answer to this would be to point to 1007–9, where, at the equivalent place in the parallel system of anapaests, we do find a passing reference to the future role of the Furies. But a *passing* reference is possible there because the lines are not telling us anything new (in the trimeter passage 1030 f. is similar). The introduction of the name Eumenides, however, would be quite new, and something would have to be made of it; it would therefore interrupt the context far more seriously.<sup>100</sup> It is always possible to talk of digressions and ring composition, but this is bound to seem somewhat lame and arbitrary.

Nor does the wider context give any more encouragement to Hermann's theory. Athena told the Furies of their future privileges in detail at 794–901, *before* they were 'tamed' – as she needed to do in order to persuade them –, and one would have expected any new name to be mentioned here, if anywhere. At 903–15, when they have begun to yield, she tells them what prayer to utter on behalf of Athens. After this they accept the bargain as enthusiastically as she could wish, so the initiative is now theirs, and, in the anapaests down to 995, she has nothing more to say to them; her role is to underline their prayers and to show what these will mean for the future. At 950 she refers to *πότνι' Ἐρινύς* – a curious thing to do if the Furies will not bear this name hereafter. At 1003–13 and 1021–31 she once more takes command and addresses the Furies, but this is for a particular purpose: to order the procession with which the play will end. If, while ordering it, she slipped in the information that the Erinyes would henceforth be called Eumenides, she would appear to be belatedly making good a distinctly careless omission.

### Conclusion

I have argued that the title *Eumenides* does not provide evidence that the renaming of the Furies occurred in the play; that Harpocration and the hypothesis provide only weak evidence; and that against this weak evidence we must set the inappropriateness of the renaming to the context after 1027 (and I do not think that any better place

<sup>98</sup> This reading is suggested by Lloyd-Jones's translation, loc. cit. (n. 93): 'You shall come to the very eye Of Theseus' land, O honorable band of children...'. But I have not been able to obtain confirmation that *ἐξίκοισθ' ἄν* is what Professor Lloyd-Jones in fact reads.

<sup>99</sup> This is pointed out by e.g. Müller and Robert (n. 56). Robert, rejecting the lacuna after 1027, wanted to place the renaming after 1031, but it is no better to separate the arrangements for the procession from the procession itself than to split up the arrangements; see also Hense, art. cit. (n. 74), 170–85.

<sup>100</sup> Hermann (*Opusc.* vi. 2. 120) seems to have thought that the Athenians were told to honour the Furies *now* with the name *Εὐμενίδες*, but the use of the name can hardly form part of the processional ritual.



can be found for it).<sup>101</sup> The goddesses worshipped beneath the Acropolis were essentially nameless, but Aeschylus wished to suggest that these nameless beings were originally reformed Erinyes. They were generally referred to as Semnai Theai, and the word *σεμναί* at *Eum.* 1041 may hint at this, as has often been suggested, though the hint can only be a weak one (unless Hartung's *σεμναί* < *θεαί* > is right), especially since the epithet is applied to the Erinyes *ante correctionem* at 383.

The title of the play in the original version of the didascalia was perhaps *Erinyes*. At some stage, however, no earlier than the closing years of the fifth century, it came to be called *Eumenides*, the word being intended to refer to the Chorus throughout the play. Much later some scholar, perhaps Didymus, noticed that Eumenides was not the name applied to the Chorus in the text, but also became confused between Aeschylus and a later author, in whose work the Erinyes became Eumenides after a trial at Athens and a holocaust at Cerynea. This confusion found its way into the play's hypothesis and into Harpocration's entry on Eumenides.

One consequence of eliminating the Eumenides from *Eum.* is that the *Eumenides* of Cratinus should probably be regarded as providing the earliest literary attestation of the word. Meineke, Kock and Edmonds all deny the existence of this play, but I see no good reason to do so;<sup>102</sup> the minor deities of Colonus, not yet dignified by tragic treatment, would not make a bad chorus for a comedy.<sup>103</sup>

#### IV. SOPHOCLES' *OEDIPUS COLONEUS*

It is generally assumed that the Eumenides of this play are identical with the Erinyes. Scholars sometimes casually refer to them as Erinyes,<sup>104</sup> and often as Furies; and the identification is sometimes made to play an important part in the interpretation of the play.<sup>105</sup> The only scholar who, to my knowledge, has actively denied the identification is S. M. Adams,<sup>106</sup> and his brief argument has hitherto won no acceptance.<sup>107</sup> But Adams was surely right.

If my arguments in Section III are correct, Sophocles' use of the word Eumenides cannot have been influenced by Aesch. *Eum.* It clearly *could* have been influenced by Eur. *Or.*, but we cannot assume *a priori* that it must have been. That play was produced in 408. It is reasonable to date the bulk of Sophocles' work on *O.C.* after the production of *Phil.* in 409, and he was dead by, at the latest, the winter of 406/5. I doubt whether the date of the play can be narrowed down any further than this;<sup>108</sup> but in any case, even if all of it was written after the production of *Or.*, Sophocles was not obliged to take account of any novelties in the work of his younger con-

<sup>101</sup> It is no use inserting the bare word *Εὐμενίδες*, or a synonym, into a corrupt line such as 1040; nor taking *εὐφρων* at 992, 1030, 1034 as hinting at Eumenides (cf. R. P. Winnington-Ingram, *Studies in Aeschylus* [Cambridge, 1983], 166 n. 39). Such theories credit Aesch. with pointless mystification, while failing to square with the external evidence which prompts them.

<sup>102</sup> *Εὐμενίδες* in the two testimonia need not be a mistake for *Εὐνείδαι*: see R. Goossens and E. Darquenne, *Chronique d'Égypte* 33 (1942), 127–32; J. T. M. F. Pieters in *Miscellanea tragica in honorem J. C. Kamerbeek* (Amsterdam, 1976), 267 f.

<sup>103</sup> On the other hand the *Eum[e]nides* of Teleclides, in which Edmonds does believe (*FAC* i. 182), rests on pure speculation by A. Koerte, *RhM* 60 (1905), 441.

<sup>104</sup> E.g. L. Edmonds, *HSCP* 85 (1981), 227 f.; J. C. Kamerbeek, *Mnem.* Ser. 4. 35 (1982), 42.

<sup>105</sup> See esp. C. M. Bowra, *Sophoclean Tragedy* (Oxford, 1944), 317–19; R. P. Winnington-Ingram, *JHS* 74 (1954), 16–24; id., *Sophocles: an Interpretation* (Cambridge, 1980), 216, 264–75, 325 f.

<sup>106</sup> *Sophocles the Playwright* (Toronto, 1957), 165.

<sup>107</sup> For some counter-arguments see B. M. W. Knox, *The Heroic Temper* (Berkeley & Los Angeles, 1964), 194 n. 12.

<sup>108</sup> The fact that Soph. died with *O.C.* unperformed need not mean that he did not complete it until 406, for he may never have completed the three plays which should have accompanied

temporary.<sup>109</sup> *Or.* is perhaps not a play to which he would greatly have wanted to pay tribute.

The word *Εὐμενίδες* occurs only twice in *O.C.*, at 42 and 486, but in both places it bears great emphasis; we are not to doubt that this is the correct title of these goddesses at Colonus. It is true that at 89 f. Oedipus clouds the issue by referring to them as Semnai Theai in his report of the oracle (as he does also at 458), leaving us in doubt as to what title the oracle actually used, but the effect is simply to identify the goddesses of Colonus, who were probably fairly obscure to most Athenians, with the better-known ones beneath the Areopagus.<sup>110</sup>

When the Stranger first reveals the name *Εὐμενίδες*, he also reveals that the same beings have other names elsewhere (43). This is sometimes thought to point to the name *Ἐρινύες*,<sup>111</sup> but the word *ἀλλαχοῦ* suggests that the Stranger is thinking of local cult titles, and we have seen (pp. 264 f.) that no cults of Erinyes are likely to have been familiar to the Athenians. The cult title that *was* familiar was Semnai Theai, and, as Winnington-Ingram himself points out, Oedipus not only will identify Eumenides and Semnai Theai at 89 f., but has just referred to the goddesses' *σεμνὸν ὄνομα* at 41. Thus, if Sophocles is pointing to any one title at 43, there can be no doubt what that title is.<sup>112</sup> Admittedly, if we list all the names which the Stranger might be thinking of, the list will have to include Erinyes; the Eumenides have some Erinyes-like characteristics, as we shall see, and Sophocles has no reason to prevent the audience from making this identification if it occurs to them to do so. But he is not actively *inviting* them to make it; if he were, why does he not use the word *Ἐρινύες* itself?

Can the answer to this question be that the Erinyes have been renamed Eumenides at some time in the past, and that the old name is now entirely superseded? No, for the word *Ἐρινύς* does occur twice (1299, 1434), with reference to the curses of Oedipus<sup>113</sup> and *not* to the goddesses of the grove. If the goddesses of the grove *were* Erinyes, it would be very strange for Polynices to take their name in vain without any acknowledgement of their presence. The fact that the word is unemphatic, almost abstract, in both places only strengthens the argument. Nor can it be said that the Eumenides' presence has simply been forgotten in this part of the play, for it is mentioned at 1391. The plain implication of the text, then, is that the goddesses of the grove are Eumenides (or Semnai Theai), that the goddesses embodying the curses of Oedipus are Erinyes, and that the two species are distinct.

So much for the Eumenides' name; what of their nature? They resemble Erinyes in being female and plural; in being objects of awe and fear (39, 127–33); and in being

it. The story in the *Life* of Eur., that Soph. dressed a chorus in black in mourning for his rival, should imply, if true, that he produced something at the Dionysia of 406, but little time would be left for the writing of *O.C.* between that date and his death. I am also unconvinced by the idea that the play was inspired by the Athenian victory mentioned at Diod. 13. 72 f. and there dated to 408/7. For other views see R. G. Tanner in *For Service to Classical Studies: essays in honour of Francis Letters* (Melbourne, 1966), 153–92; F. Stoessl, *Dioniso* 40 (1966), 5–12.

<sup>109</sup> Nor in that of any predecessor who may have influenced Eur. (p. 266 above).

<sup>110</sup> The fact that Aesch. and Eur. had the Erinyes 'converted' (by implication) into Semnai Theai, and that Soph. equates the Semnai Theai with the Eumenides, clearly does not mean that Soph. equates the Eumenides with the Erinyes. However popular the *Oresteia* may have been, the Athenians could surely think of the familiar cult of the Semnai Theai without thinking of the myth of Orestes. Nor is the audience of *O.C.* given any reason to recall *Eum.*; if they recall any Aeschylean play, it will doubtless be *Eleusinioi* (the suppliant play which Aesch. set in *his* home deme).

<sup>111</sup> Winnington-Ingram, *Sophocles* (n. 105), 267.

<sup>112</sup> The point was not lost on the scholiast on Aeschin. 1. 188, who, discussing the Semnai Theai of Athens, wrote *φασὶ μέντοι αὐτὰς οἱ μὲν Γῆς εἶναι καὶ Σκότους...* (cf. *O.C.* 40).

<sup>113</sup> It is not generally accepted that 1299 refers to a curse by Oedipus, but the point will be argued below.

associated with the Underworld, as is shown by the kind of libations they receive (100, 477, 481) and by their parentage (40, 106). Indeed, this parentage – ‘daughters of Earth and Darkness’ – may have been suggested by that of the Erinyes, who are daughters of Earth in Hesiod, of Night in Aeschylus; Σκότος could be considered the nearest masculine equivalent of Νύξ. And the implication of πάνθ’ ὀρώσας at 42 is that they observe and punish crime (cf. *Aj.* 836).

On the other hand, at both occurrences of the name Eumenides (42–4, 486 f.) it is made clear that this is no mere euphemism, as in Eur. *Or.*, but a name that they can be expected to live up to. They do not dwell underground, like even the Semnai Theai of Athens, but in a charming grove.<sup>114</sup> Pouring libations to them is a holy and pious act (466–506), utterly different in import from Clytemnestra’s nocturnal offerings to the Erinyes (Aesch. *Eum.* 106–9). And their role in the play is entirely benevolent. They befriend Oedipus as their suppliant (44, 84–110, 486 f., 1011) – behaviour associated elsewhere with Semnai Theai (p. 262 above), but not with Erinyes. His prayer that they should help him against Creon (1010–13; cf. 457 f.) is answered, and so, we may take it, is his prayer that they should grant him the release promised by Apollo (101–10).<sup>115</sup> And he not only treats them with the greatest respect but feels a kinship with them (100) and at one point actually calls them ‘sweet’ (106) – the last word that one would expect to find applied to any Erinyes in Greek literature.

It may be objected that their benevolence proves little in itself, since most critics regard it as a paradoxical quality.<sup>116</sup> Certainly the γλυκείαι παῖδες ἀρχαίου Σκότου are paradoxical; goddesses of the Underworld yet dwellers in a charming grove, Fury-like yet nymph-like, punishers of crime yet benevolent to their suppliants, they are ideally suited to presiding over a paradoxical death which is also a blessing and an honour. But, if their benevolence does not formally rule out an identification with Erinyes, it must help to deter the audience from wishing to make one. And our knowledge of the cults near Sicyon and Tiryns (pp. 260 f. above) shows beyond doubt that the paradox was not Sophocles’ creation; it was inherent in the beliefs of ordinary Greeks (certainly at those sites, and presumably at Colonus also) concerning the Eumenides whom they worshipped.<sup>117</sup>

But the decisive factor must be that of curses. Throughout most of Greek literature, and all of Greek tragedy, the enforcement of curses, spoken or unspoken, is the primary function of Erinyes; and they are actually equated with personified Ἀραί at Aesch. *Sept.* 70, *Eum.* 417. Now the Eumenides are, in fact, invoked in Oedipus’ curse

<sup>114</sup> The descriptions of the grove may have some sad and sinister undertones (C. Segal, *Tragedy and Civilization* [Cambridge, Mass., 1981], 371–6), but the dominant impression is of tranquillity and beauty.

<sup>115</sup> I. M. Linforth, *UCPCP* 14 (1950–52), 92–7, denies that the Eumenides have any connection with Oedipus’ death. He is right to point out that they are not mentioned at the end of the play, but they surely do more than ‘create... an atmosphere of solemnity’; we must assume that the prayer at 101–10 is answered, though in a mysterious and undefined way.

<sup>116</sup> E.g. C. H. Whitman, *Sophocles* (Cambridge, Mass., 1951), 201 f.; G. H. Gellie, *Sophocles: a reading* (Melbourne, 1972), 161. These scholars also claim that the Eumenides are identical, not with ‘normal’ Erinyes, but with the reformed Erinyes at the end of Aesch. *Eum.*, but, as we have seen, this is difficult to reconcile with the fact that unreformed Erinyes are still at large (see also n. 110 above).

<sup>117</sup> The beauties of the grove include the νάρκισσος, μεγάλαιν θεῶν ἀρχαίων στεφάνωμ’, ὃ τε χρυσαυγῆς κρόκος (*O.C.* 683–5). There can be little doubt that the dual is the right reading and that the Great Goddesses are Demeter and Kore, but the schol. on 681 reports a controversy in which one side claimed that these goddesses were the Eumenides (or ‘Erinyes’) and cited Euphron fr. 94 P, where the Eumenides (as agents of punishment) are νάρκισσου ἐπιστεφῆες πλοκαμίδας. The ambivalence of the Eumenides, well illustrated by this quotation, does resemble that of Demeter and Kore, and this adds point to Sophocles’ reference to the latter here.

on his sons (1391). But the manner of the invocation does not suggest that they have any specific connection with curses; rather the reverse, for they are only the middle term, and the least emphatic, in a set of three. Oedipus invokes the darkness of Tartarus because his sons are to dwell there, Ares because he is the cause of the strife between them, and 'the goddesses here' because, we may suppose, they are capable of destruction and punishment, and because Oedipus is speaking in their presence. This invocation need not differ in motive from that at 1010–13, where Oedipus is not cursing but merely praying for the Eumenides' help.<sup>118</sup>

Still more crucial are lines 864–5, which are claimed by Knox<sup>119</sup> as an instance of Eumenides invoked in a curse. The lines read:

ΚΡ. αὐδᾶ σιωπᾶν. ΟΙ. μὴ γὰρ αἶδε δαίμονες  
θεῖέν μ' ἄφωνον τῇσδε τῆς ἀρᾶς ἔτι.

Oedipus' words seem to mean 'No, may the goddesses here no longer<sup>120</sup> prevent me from uttering this curse!' The expression does not appear quite logical, and is perhaps best taken as a compromise between 'Let my respect for the goddesses here no longer prevent me from uttering...' and 'May the goddesses here not object to my uttering...'. In any case, the implication is that they have in some sense prevented him from uttering a curse hitherto, and might do so now; Oedipus, then, does not *invoke* the Eumenides but prays for their indulgence, as Linforth puts it.<sup>121</sup> And, if the Eumenides were Erinyes, this would be absurd; there is no more danger that Erinyes might object to curses than that Ares might object to war, or Aphrodite to love. Nor is it possible to convert Oedipus' words into an invocation by regarding them as an instance of litotes in the manner of e.g. Aesch. *Supp.* 904, for this would yield the impossible sense 'May the goddesses here assist me in uttering yet (?) this curse'. Whatever divine assistance Oedipus may need in ensuring the fulfilment of his curses, he needs none in uttering them.

What has been said so far might suffice as a formal argument that the Eumenides of *O.C.* are not Erinyes. But those who claim otherwise have a motive for doing so. Was Oedipus not pursued by Erinyes earlier in his career? And is there not, therefore, some highly Sophoclean paradox and irony, which only a philistine would consent to sacrifice, in his being befriended by these same beings at the end of his life?

The answer to these questions is No. It has been given, firmly enough, by Linforth,<sup>122</sup> who points out that the play contains no hint of any past connection between the Eumenides and Oedipus or of any change of attitude on their part. Not everyone has taken the point, however,<sup>123</sup> so further discussion may be worth while.

<sup>118</sup> Cf. Adams, *loc. cit.* (n. 106); Linforth, *art. cit.* (n. 115), 93.

<sup>119</sup> *Loc. cit.* (n. 107).

<sup>120</sup> Campbell and Jebb take ἔτι not with μὴ but with τῇσδε τῆς ἀρᾶς; Jebb renders, 'Nay, may the Powers of this place suffer me to utter yet this curse', in addition to the curse on the sons at 421 ff. I am doubtful whether ἔτι can be used in this way without ἄλλος or the like, but my argument is little affected, for Jebb's rendering still implies that the Eumenides might *not* suffer Oedipus to utter a curse. Cf. Campbell *ad loc.* ('Though they enjoin silence from cursing, let them not enforce it here'), and contrast Radermacher *ad loc.* ('Die Eumeniden hießen selbst *Ἀπαί...*').

<sup>121</sup> *Art. cit.* (n. 115), 93. Silence is appropriate in the Eumenides' presence, as Dr Richardson has pointed out to me, citing 128–32, 489 (with schol. *ad loc.*).

<sup>122</sup> *Loc. cit.* (n. 115).

<sup>123</sup> E.g. Winnington-Ingram, *Sophocles* (n. 105), 326: 'the generous reception... which is also, mysteriously and paradoxically, a reception by the Eumenides who, as Erinyes, have dogged his tragic career'.

The idea that Oedipus was pursued by Erinyes is familiar to us chiefly from *Od.* 11. 280, where the Erinyes are those of his mother Epikaste. Here Epikaste hangs herself some time before Oedipus' death, and we may take it that she dies cursing him. The Erinyes of Laius are not mentioned, perhaps merely because Epikaste is the subject of the passage. We do meet these Erinyes at Pind. *Ol.* 2. 38–42, Hdt. 4. 149 (cf. Paus. 9. 5. 15),<sup>124</sup> though they are held responsible for the sufferings of later generations rather than those of Oedipus. Whether the epics *Oidipodeia* and *Thebais* referred to the Erinyes of either parent we cannot tell. Stesichorus, however, can hardly have referred to those of the mother, since he makes her survive at Thebes (so that her Erinyes have nothing to avenge) at a time when Oedipus is evidently dead or in exile.<sup>125</sup>

The tragedians, then, inherited conflicting traditions about Oedipus,<sup>126</sup> in which neither parent's Erinyes were a constant factor. Aeschylus and Euripides followed Stesichorus in making Jocasta survive until the time of the Theban War,<sup>127</sup> and so could not make use of her Erinyes. Those of Laius are not mentioned by Aeschylus,<sup>128</sup> and are at most hinted at in a mention of his curses at Eur. *Phoen.* 1611.

In Soph. *Ant.* it seems that Jocasta did not survive as long as in Aeschylus and Euripides, but it is clear from *Ant.* 53 f. (whatever commentators may say) that she survived Oedipus;<sup>129</sup> and Laius is barely mentioned (165). But the play which the audience of *O.C.* are most likely to remember is *O.T.* Here Jocasta does kill herself during Oedipus' life, as in Homer, but she does so more in sorrow than in anger, without any wish to curse him; and Laius, who dies in ignorance of his assailant's identity, has no opportunity to do so.<sup>130</sup> It is not surprising, then, that the Erinyes are unmentioned in the play, and that lines 1327–33 leave no room for any responsibility on their part.<sup>131</sup>

It should be clear from all this that the audience of *O.C.* could not have assumed that Oedipus was pursued by any Erinyes if the play itself did not say so. Returning to the play, we may note that Oedipus sometimes feels able to claim that, because he

<sup>124</sup> See Edmonds, art. cit. (n. 104), 225 f.

<sup>125</sup> For the 'Lille Stesichorus' see P. Parsons, *ZPE* 26 (1977), 7–36. That Oedipus is dead or exiled here seems to follow from the division of his property; the awkward notion of preserving him as a skeleton in the cupboard is unlikely to predate Eur. That the mother of Eteocles and Polynices is Epikaste or Jocasta (i.e. the mother of Oedipus) and not Euryganeia cannot be proved (Parsons, p. 20; A. Gostoli, *GRBS* 19 [1978], 23–5), but is suggested by the analogy of Aesch. *Sept.* (missed by Parsons and Gostoli) and Eur. *Phoen.*

<sup>126</sup> See in general H. C. Baldry, *G&R* Ser. 2. 3 (1956), 24–37.

<sup>127</sup> That this is true of Aesch. has not often been noticed, but is shown by *Sept.* 926–31. If the death of Eteocles and Polynices is one of the factors making Jocasta the most unfortunate of mothers, she must have lived to see it.

<sup>128</sup> Some see significance in the fact that Aesch. had Laius killed at Potniae (fr. 172 M), but the eponymous Potniai seem to have been Demeter and Kore (Paus. 9. 8. 1; cf. Ar. *Thesm.* 1149, 1156, Soph. *O.C.* 1050), not the Erinyes (cf. n. 53 above).

<sup>129</sup> Commentators hasten to warn us that *hysteron* can be *proteron*, *ἔπειτα* need not be temporal, and the lines need not mean what they appear to say. One wonders who warned the audience in the theatre – an audience which, we must remember, could have known the work of Stesichorus and Aesch. but could not have known *O.T.* It is true that we do not elsewhere find a version in which Jocasta survives Oedipus and then hangs herself, but such a version is quite intelligible as a compromise between Stesichorus and Homer. And, if Soph. is hinting that she hanged herself because her son and husband was dead, has this not some thematic relevance to a play that includes the suicides of Haemon and Eurydice?

<sup>130</sup> Parker, op. cit. (n. 34), 109, thinks that Laius' Erinyes 'remarkably' spare Oedipus because he acted in ignorance; but *Laius'* ignorance seems a more likely explanation.

<sup>131</sup> Apollo is aided by Keres in a highly figurative passage at *O.T.* 469–72. *O.T.* 417 f. (Oedipus will be exiled by the *δαιμόνους ἀρά* of his parents) must also be understood figuratively.

is morally innocent, he is unpolluted (287, 548),<sup>132</sup> and this hardly suggests that he has received the Erinyes' attentions.

At 1299 Polynices, talking to Oedipus, blames his own banishment on τήν σήν Ἐρινύν, and this is taken by Jebb and others to mean 'the Fury who pursues you'. That interpretation, however, is open to objection, not only in mythical terms (Oedipus is not pursued by an Erinyes elsewhere in tragedy), but in linguistic ones. The only parallel that I have found for it is Eur. *Or.* 264; and against this I have counted at least 14 places before 400 B.C. (including *O.C.* 1434) where the Erinyes 'of' a person (or god) is his avenger, not his pursuer.<sup>133</sup> Thus, while the line may be formally ambiguous, there can be little doubt how the audience would take it. Jebb's reason for rejecting the obvious interpretation is that 'Polyneices knows nothing of the imprecation uttered at 412 ff.', but that is hardly the point, for Polynices is talking of a time before the action of the play began. The question is whether Oedipus had uttered any curses then; and the answer is provided by 1375, τοιάσδ' ἀρὰς σφῶν πρόσθε τ' ἐξάνηκ' ἐγώ. This line in its turn is generally taken to refer to curses within the play, but Knox,<sup>134</sup> without mentioning 1299, argues strongly for Campbell's view that it refers to curses uttered earlier. When 1299 and 1375 are considered together, it becomes evident that Sophocles is not entirely suppressing the usual version of the story, whereby a curse of Oedipus caused the quarrel between his sons,<sup>135</sup> although he leaves the circumstances vague so as not to distract attention from the 'main' curse at 1370-96.

We may conclude that pursuit by Erinyes forms no part of the myth of Oedipus as Sophocles conceives it. I believe I have shown, therefore, not only that the Eumenides of *O.C.* are not Erinyes, but that nothing would be gained for the interpretation of the play if they were.

Stanstead Bury, Hertfordshire

A. L. BROWN

<sup>132</sup> Admittedly he is not consistent; see 1132-8.

<sup>133</sup> *Il.* 21. 412; *Od.* 11. 280, 17. 475; Hes. *Theog.* 472; *Thebais* fr. 2. 8; Alc. fr. 129. 14 L-P; Aesch. *Sept.* 70, 723, 887 (cf. *Ag.* 1432 f.); Hdt. 4. 149. 2; Soph. *Ant.* 1075, *O.C.* 1434; Eur. *Med.* 1389, *Phoen.* 624. For some later examples see E. Rohde, *RhM* 50 (1896), 10 f. = *Kl. Schr.* 233-5.

<sup>134</sup> *Op. cit.* (n. 107), 194 n. 14. The argument seems to me valid despite Winnington-Ingram, *Sophocles* (n. 105), 266 f. n. 50; anyway the combination of 1299 and 1375 appears conclusive.

<sup>135</sup> In fact, as is pointed out by Robert, *op. cit.* (n. 6), 479 f., Soph. is following the version of the epic *Thebais*, where the sons were condemned by one curse to quarrel, by another to die at each other's hands. The fact that at *O.C.* 369 the quarrel seems to have been caused by the ancient curse on the whole family is quite compatible with a further causal strand derived from a curse uttered by Oedipus (cf. Aesch. *Sept.* 720-91).