

Thus, even if Reeve's (1) does not suffice on its own to explain *why* fire is primary for Heraclitus, it may – if suggestion (B) is correct – help to explain *how* it is primary for Zeno.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> In the second part of this note I have benefited greatly from the discussion at the colloquium on Stoic physics held in Cambridge in 1977.

### SOPHOCLES, *OEDIPUS TYRANNUS* 873

ὕβρις φυτεύει τύραννον· ὕβρις κτλ. Thus the MSS, Schol. (= *Suda* v 15) and Stobaeus 4. 8. 11 (p. 298 H.). ὕβριν φυτεύει τυραννίς· ὕβρις κτλ. Thus Blaydes, followed recently by R. P. Winnington-Ingram, *JHS* 91 (1971), 126 = *Sophocles. An interpretation* (Cambridge, 1980), p. 192 ('What is positively gained by making this correction? Three things'); R. D. Dawe, *Sophoclis Tragoediae* (Teubner, 1975), i. 156 and *Sophocles. Oedipus Rex* (Cambridge, 1982), pp. 18, 61, 182 f. ('We may be sure of this for two reasons'); R. W. B. Burton, *The Chorus in Sophocles' Tragedies* (Oxford, 1980), p. 164 ('The resulting sense is admirable'); J. Diggle, *CR* n.s. 32 (1982), 14 ('My heart warms... What is drastic about altering three letters?').

First: ὕβριν weakens the anaphora (cf. *Ajax* 1198 f. κείνος... ἐκεῖνος..., Horace, *Odes* 3. 2. 17 ff. *virtus... virtus...*, etc.), and the rhythm is further spoilt by the ugly juxtaposition τυραννίς· ὕβρις.

Second: τυραννίς breaks the train of thought. There is a clear contrast between *strophe* and *antistrophe*: the Chorus pray for εὐσεπτος ἀγνεία (864), because they fear its opposite, ὕβρις, which leads to tyranny and destruction. 'They pray for purity and reverence. They assert that it is pride and violence that produce a Tyrant. They hope that Oedipus is not a Tyrant' (J. T. Sheppard, *The Oedipus Tyrannus of Sophocles* (Cambridge, 1920), p. 151). Similarly J. C. Kamerbeek, *The Plays of Sophocles*. Part IV (Leiden, 1967), pp. 175 f. In this context the sequence 'May I be pure: Tyranny begets Hybris' would be lame and disjointed (or are we to imagine that the Chorus are tyrants?).

Third: a dull commonplace is no substitute for a splendid poetic image. Cf. Cratinus' *Στάσις δὲ καὶ πρεσβυγενής* | *Χρόνος ἀλλήλοισι μίγνεντε* | *μέγιστον τίκτετον τύραννον* (= fr. 258 in *PCG* vol. iv). At *OT* 1080 Oedipus calls himself *παῖδα τῆς Τύχης* and at Eur. *Troades* 768 f. Helen is cursed as the daughter of Ἀλάστορος μὲν πρῶτον, εἶτα δὲ Φθόνου | Φόνον τε Θανάτου θ'. For other genealogical metaphors see Sandbach on Men. *Dysc.* 88.

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### A NOTE ON ARISTOPHANES, *CLOUDS* 977–8

ἡλείψατο δ' ἂν τοῦμφαλοῦ οὐδεὶς παῖς ὑπένερθεν τότ' ἂν, ὥστε τοῖς αἰδοίοισι δρόσος καὶ χνοῦς ὥσπερ μήλοισιν ἐπήνθει.

K. J. Dover, in *Greek Homosexuality* (London, 1978), p. 125 n. 1, observes: 'My interpretation *ad loc.* (sc. in his Commentary), that *drosos* is Cowper's secretion, appearing when the boy's penis has been erected by titillation, is far-fetched (I am bound to agree with some reviewers on this), but no other interpretation so far seems to me to pay enough attention to the semantics of *drosos* or to explain why Right

regards the beauty of “*drosos* and down” as incompatible with anointing below the navel’.

Dover apparently takes the view that an erect penis (without which there is no Cowper’s secretion), open to view, can be numbered among signs of sexual modesty. What, in such circumstances, would he consider to be a sign of sexual immodesty?

Other interpretations so far are bizarre, and fall outside the word’s semantic range. *LSJ*<sup>9</sup> s.v. *δρόσος* l. 4 gives ‘down on the cheek’. Similarly Starkie, who refrains from specific comment, translates ‘so that a tender quince-like down clad their limbs’, and Van Daele (Budé) offers ‘de sorte que sur ses organes fleurissait un frais et tendre duvet, comme sur des coings’. Van Leeuwen comments on *δρόσος*: ‘ex asse h. l. respondet Germanicum *duft*’, perhaps because some fruit does indeed have a ‘fragrance’.

I venture to suggest that the correct interpretation emerges spontaneously from the implications of the context, without the aid of subtle exegetical midwifery.

Lines 973–80 describe the sexual modesty, *vis-à-vis* their admirers, of the *παῖδες* of the good old days, and lines 981–3 their respect for their elders shown in table manners and comportment. At the wrestling school they sat, presumably while receiving instruction from the coach, in an unprovocatively discreet posture (973 f.); they got to their feet again brushing the sand together to wipe out the imprint of their genitals (975 f.). Then, unmentioned in the text because not used, and perhaps useless, to sustain the theme of sexual modesty, they took (wrestling) exercise, if they had not already done so, and after this, covered with sweat and sand, they washed. Then they dried off in the sun or at least in the open air, and as the dewy film and droplets of cold water (which is the meaning of *δρόσος* at *Frogs* 1339, as often elsewhere) evaporated, the pubescent down of the genitals dried fluffily, just as the velvety down of fruit rises from the surface of the skin as the morning sun dries off the night dew (977 f.) – an attractive simile for what was, to Right Reason, an attractive sight. Then they oiled themselves, but not below the navel. By implication, modern boys do this, deliberately drawing their admirers’ attention to the glistening gleam of parts quite other than the shining torso (Theocr. 2. 79 f., and cf. 2. 51 and 2. 102 f.). Oil, which gives an alluring gloss to a sturdy growth of pubic hair, would of course stick a young boy’s down to the skin. Right Reason, who clearly preferred the discreetly evanescent sparkle of water-drops, expresses a personal dislike of this on aesthetic grounds. He may also be insinuating a protest against the young boys’ premature sophistication in aping older boys with, in his view, equal shamelessness. A boy of the good old days did not mollify either his speech or his looks in the company of his admirers (979 f.), for old-fashioned convention required him to play ‘hard to get’ whatever his real feelings may have been (*πρὸς τὸν ἐραστὴν* 979 belongs with *φυρασάμενος*, and is so understood by *LSJ*<sup>9</sup> s.v.; *ἐβάδιζεν* 980 means not ‘strutted about’ (Rogers), but ‘used to walk’ sc. homewards, escorted by his admirer(s)). Finally (981–3), having arrived home, he showed respect for his elders at the family dinner table.

This interpretation, scarcely more than a paraphrase, assumes, not unreasonably, that in lines 973–83 Aristophanes describes the boys’ activities in chronological sequence as part of a day’s routine. This assumption, if correct, weakens the possibility of any sexual contact with their admirers in lines 977 f., while they are washing and anointing themselves in their peer-group. Auto-erotic stimulation would also be precluded if the boys’ genitals, like Dover’s interpretation, had received a douche of cold water.