

SHORTER NOTES

THE PROPER MEANING OF ΧΩΜΑ AT AESCHYLUS, *SUPPLICES* 870

The phrase κατὰ Σαρπηδόνιον χῶμα πολύψαμμον¹ at Aeschylus, *Supplices* 869–70² is explained by a scholiast (Σ Aesch. *Supp.* 869–70 Smith) as κατὰ τὴν Σαρπηδονίαν ἄκραν, referring to a promontory in Cilicia.³ All modern commentators on this passage seem to have accepted the scholiast,⁴ and in the 1940 edition of LSJ ‘promontory, spit of sand’ are given as translations of χῶμα in this passage.⁵

This would be an unusual meaning of χῶμα. A search of the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* reveals more than sixty instances in toto of χῶμα in Classical Greek literature. In the vast majority of cases it refers to a man-made feature.⁶ There are only four other examples of χῶμα referring to a natural phenomenon.

Two of these, *Hell. Oxy.* 24.6 Chambers, where the meaning is ‘hill’, and Theophr. *Hist. Pl.* 2.5.2, where the reference is to soil in the ground through which roots grow, are irrelevant to the case under discussion. The other two are relevant: at Xen. *Hell.* 2.3.46 the reference is to the promontory at Eetioneia; and at Pl. *Criti.* 111b the reference is clearly to sediment built up by natural processes, and ‘spit of sand’ (though not ‘promontory’) would be an appropriate translation there. These examples establish that ‘promontory’ or ‘spit of sand’ is a possible, albeit rare, translation of χῶμα.

Importantly, however, such a meaning never occurs elsewhere in tragedy; in all instances beyond the one under discussion, χῶμα always refers to a tomb.⁷ Nor is the translation sometimes offered for χῶμα πολύψαμμον, ‘sandbank’ or something similar,⁸ appropriate for the Σαρπηδονία ἄκρα in Cilicia, which is elsewhere (Σ Ap. Rhod. 1.216–17a Wendel; Hsch. Σ 227 s.v. Σαρπηδόνιον) described as πέτρα.

¹ πολύψαμμον is G. Burges’ emendation (‘Emendationes in Aeschyli *Supplices*’, *The Classical Journal* 3 [1811], 416–17) of the ms. πολυψάμαθον.

² Line 870 in M. L. West’s Teubner edition (Stuttgart, 1990).

³ For which see J. Zwicker, ‘Sarpedon’, *RE* iii.A 45–6; W. Ruge, ‘Sarpedon(ion)’, *RE* iii.A 48.

⁴ E.g. T. G. Tucker (ed.), *The ‘Supplices’ of Aeschylus* (London, 1889), p. 167; H. F. Johansen and E. W. Whittle (edd.), *Aeschylus: The Suppliants* (Copenhagen, 1980), iii. 202–3 ad loc. The only partial exception is A. P. Q. F. Sottomayor in her commentary (*Ésquilo: As Suplicantes* [Coimbra, 1968], p. 77 n. 476), who owing to Homer acknowledges the possibility that a location in Lycia is meant, though in her translation (p. 77) she maintains the *communis opinio*.

⁵ H. G. Liddell and R. Scott, rev. H. S. Jones, *A Greek-English Lexicon*⁹ (Oxford, 1940), p. 2014 s.v. χῶμα. They add the note ‘(lyr.)’.

⁶ The only other exceptions to this given by LSJ are the Theophrastus passages cited in the text and the post-Classical *Ex.* 8.16, where the translation ‘the dust of the earth’ is given for τὸ χῶμα τῆς γῆς.

⁷ Aesch. *Cho.* 723; Soph. *Ant.* 1216; Eur. *Alc.* 997; *Hec.* 211, 524; *Or.* 116; *Supp.* 53; fr. 617 Nauck; often, as in Eur. *Hec.* 221 or *Supp.* 53, the reference is specifically to the mound of earth covering a tomb.

⁸ F. A. Paley (tr.), *Aeschylus translated into English Prose* (Cambridge, 1864), p. 24: ‘sandy headland’; H. W. Smyth (ed.), *Aeschylus* i. (Harvard, 1922), p. 85: ‘sandy barrow’; P. Vellacott (tr.), *Aeschylus: Prometheus Bound and Other Plays* (Harmondsworth, 1961), p. 80: ‘the sandbanks by Sarpedon’s tomb’; J. Lembke (tr.), *Aeschylus: Suppliants* (Oxford, 1975), p. 98: ‘sandy promontory-bank-tumulus’.

The translation 'tomb' seems far more appropriate in the context.⁹ There is, however, no evidence beyond this passage that there was a tomb of Sarpedon on the Cilician promontory. J. Zwicker argues that the cult of Apollo Sarpedon (or Artemis Sarpedon, according to Strab. 14.5.19) at Seleucia-in-Cilicia, which is adjacent to the Sarpedonia Akra, is evidence for a claimed burial of Sarpedon in the vicinity;¹⁰ but if so there is no literary mention of this. In any case, the earliest mention of the cult is in a context datable to 146 B.C. (Diod. 32.10.2). Homer, of whose text the educated audience for the *Suppliants* would automatically think, says that Sarpedon was buried in Lycia (*Il.* 16.455–7, 16.673–5, 16.683),¹¹ and there is considerable evidence for locating the tomb at the Lycian city of Xanthos (*Σ* Hom. *Il.* 16.673b Erbse; App. *B.Civ.* 4.78–9; Arist. fr. 641.58 Rose).¹² The Lycian coast, with a reputation for being a difficult voyage (Strab. 14.3.2) might also better fit the Danaids' desire that the Egyptians be wrecked off the *Σαρπηδόιον χῶμα* than the Cilician promontory, which was not known for its poor weather.¹³

Aeschylus in fact probably dealt with the death and burial of Sarpedon in another play, the *Kāpes* or *Eὐρωπη*.¹⁴ The title would suggest that Aeschylus associated Sarpedon with Caria, but this may be explained by Strabo's comment (14.3.3) that the poets often confused Caria and Lycia. The play cannot be dated, but since the *Supplikes* belongs to the later years of Aeschylus' career,¹⁵ there is at least a chance that the *Kāpes* preceded it, in which case the Cario-Lycian location of this work would make it most unlikely that a subsequent throwaway reference to Sarpedon's *χῶμα* related to the Cilician promontory.

The scholiast may have been misled by knowledge of the Cilician cult, which may perhaps have resulted in a rival claim to that of Xanthos for being the location of Sarpedon's tomb. Alternatively, Aeschylus' description of the tomb as *πολύψαμμον* may have confused the scholiast, if he could not understand why a location some distance inland could be described as 'very sandy' (which suggests that he had not been there, as autopsy makes the epithet wholly comprehensible; the sand easily blows from the dunes at Patara to Xanthos, and in antiquity Xanthos was almost certainly much closer to the sea than it is now). Or the explanation may be simply that the scholiast knew of the Sarpedonia Akra and that *χῶμα* could mean 'promontory', but was ignorant of the Lycian tomb. Whatever the cause, it certainly seems likely that the scholiast is mistaken; Aeschylus is referring to the Lycian tomb.

It is interesting that the date of the *Supplikes* is shortly after Lycia was brought into the Delian League by Kimon (Diod. 11.60.4),¹⁶ and coincides with the rebuilding of

⁹ It is only fair to note that of the translations mentioned in n. 8, Smyth, Vellacott and Lembke all attempt to incorporate some sense of this meaning; see also the Budé edition (P. Mazon [tr.], *Eschyle* i. [Paris, 1946], p. 44).

¹⁰ Zwicker, op. cit., 46.

¹¹ Tucker, loc. cit., reconciles Homer and the scholiast by saying that Lycia evidently extended a great deal further east in Homeric times; Pomponius Mela (1.77) does say that the Cilician promontory marked the limits of Sarpedon's rule.

¹² I have argued in 'Dynastic tombs of Xanthos', *AS* 42 (1992), 55–6 that it is possible to identify the monument amongst the archaeology of Xanthos. This argument is further developed in 'The identification of a hero-cult centre in Lycia', in M. P. J. Dillon (ed.), *Religion in the Ancient World* (Amsterdam, 1995), pp. 223–37.

¹³ Johansen and Whittle, loc. cit.

¹⁴ S. Radt (ed.), *TrGF* iii. pp. 217–22.

¹⁵ *POxy.* 2256 fr. 3 (= B. Snell [ed.], *TrGF* i. DID C 6) gives the date, which is usually restored as 463, though this may be an optimistic reading, and going no further than a date somewhere in the period 467–59 may be safer. See A. F. Garvie, *Aeschylus' Supplikes* (Cambridge, 1969), pp. 1–28; O. Taplin, *The Stagecraft of Aeschylus* (Oxford, 1977, corrected edition, 1989), p. 195.

¹⁶ Diodorus dates this event to 470/69. The exact date is debatable, but sometime c. 470 is probably correct.

Sarpedon's tomb at Xanthos after its destruction in a fire.¹⁷ This would be particularly noteworthy if the Athenians under Kimon were responsible for the burning of the acropolis at Xanthos.¹⁸ There may be other reasons for Aeschylus' reference, however; Roger Travis will in a forthcoming dissertation connect it with Herodotus' report (1.173.4–5) of Lycian matrilineality.¹⁹ Whatever the case, it is to be hoped that this paper has demonstrated exactly what it is to which Aeschylus refers.²⁰

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¹⁷ Keen, *AS* 42, 55; *ibid.*, 'Identification of a hero-cult', p. 228.

¹⁸ As suggested by H. Metzger, *Fouilles de Xanthos* ii. (Paris, 1963), p. 81 and P. Demargne and H. Metzger, 'Xanthos', *RE* ix.A 1386–7, but disputed by T. R. Bryce, *The Lycians* i. (Copenhagen, 1986), pp. 103–4.

¹⁹ R. Travis, *Allegorical Fantasy and the Chorus in Sophocles' Oedipus Coloneus* (Ph.D. diss., Berkeley, forthcoming). My thanks to Roger Travis for discussing this matter with me and permission to cite this work.

²⁰ My thanks to P. W. G. Glare, Prof. P. J. Rhodes, R. Travis, Prof. D. Whitehead, and the referee of *CQ* for their comments on the ideas included in this note.

AESCHYLUS, *EUMENIDES* 174–8

κάμοί γε λυπρός, καὶ τὸν οὐκ ἐκλύσεται·
ὕπὸ δὲ γὰν φυγῶν οὐποτ' ἐλευθεροῦται,
ποτιτρόπαιος ὦν δ' ἕτερον ἐν κάρᾳ
μιάστορ' ἑκείνου† πάσεται.

The difficulty in this antistrophe is found mainly in its last line and is caused by ἐκείνου which, as it stands, does not make sense and is also unmetrical (υ--), instead of the required -υ-, cf. the last line [172] of the strophe). It is noticeable on the other hand that the basic meaning of the antistrophe is not really affected by omitting ἑκείνου†, and it looks as though the scholia did not pay any attention to it in commenting (on ἕτερον ἐν κάρᾳ) as follows: ὦν ἐναγῆς ἐν τῷ κάρᾳ ἑαυτοῦ ἕτερον μιάστορα λήψεται καὶ οἱ ἐξ αὐτοῦ δίκας ἡμῖν δώσουσιν.

Thus Orestes is never to be set free, even if he escapes under the earth, where the Erinyes cannot persecute him, since their activities extend only within the upper world, cf. 75–7, 334–40. It is then the god Hades who will succeed the Erinyes in pursuing Orestes by judging (and chastising) him, cf. 267–75, 339–40,¹ and he is the ἕτερος μιάστωρ, whom Orestes πάσεται ἐν κάρᾳ if he is still ποτιτρόπαιος. This being so, Orestes will be punished in the underworld—in the event that he escape there—whereas οἱ ἐξ αὐτοῦ δίκας δώσουσιν to the Erinyes, i.e. his due to them will be paid by his ἔκγονοι (this last in accordance with the scholia, supposing that the phrase οἱ ἐξ αὐτοῦ δίκας δώσουσιν is *perhaps* a hint concerning the *locus desperatus* ἑκείνου†).²

From the numerous conjectures what has actually prevailed is Kirchhoff's εἶσιν οὐ, adopted by many editors (Blass, Wilamowitz, Murray, Groeneboom, Page, Sommerstein), with West printing ἑκείνου†, and Podlecki including in *crucis* all the words from ἕτερον to the end.

¹ For a judgement in Hades of sins committed in life cf. *Suppl.* 228–31, 414–16; *Pi. O.* 2. 56ff.; *Ar. Ra.* 145ff.; *Pl. R.* 330d–331b, *Phd.* 113d ff., *Grg.* 523a ff.

² It could have been a consequence of such considerations that we have conjectures like ἐξ ἔθεν Wakefield, ἐκ τινος Wieseler, ἀντ' ἐμοῦ Kayser, ἐν γένει vel ἐγγενῇ Hartung, ἐκ γένους Weil, ἐκγονον Zakas (ἐκγόνου Wecklein). Two other conjectures seem to intend someone related to the Erinyes (Hades?): ἐξ ἐμοῦ Scholfield, ἐκ γ' ἐμοῦ Newman, whereas a different line of thought is ἐκ σίνους (Sauppe, Wecklein). Many other conjectures are listed in Wecklein's edition (Berlin, 1885).