

## DIFFERENT STORIES: SOPHOCLEAN NARRATIVE(S) IN THE *PHILOCTETES*

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### I

The title of this paper might point to either of two much-discussed critical issues in Sophocles' *Philoctetes*: the different stories told at different times about the role of Philoctetes' bow in the taking of Troy, or the two different stories (one finally unrealized) suggested by the play's double ending. In fact, however, I shall be primarily concerned with neither of these, although my reading may by indirection shed light on both.<sup>1</sup> My subject here is rather the way in which the *Philoctetes* exemplifies a general feature of Sophoclean tragedy: the use of references to past and future events to suggest different stories belonging to different characters.

It is often observed that Sophocles' usual mode of introducing information about past and future, about what is, in Aristotle's phrase, "outside the drama"<sup>2</sup> is different from that of Aeschylus or Euripides. In place of a communal evocation of what precedes the play by the chorus, or a self-contained narrative of background information by a single character, divine or human, we characteristically find in Sophocles the gradual emergence, through dialogue, of what went before. And the events that follow his plays are rarely predicted explicitly or fully; instead, in each of his extant tragedies, Sophocles at some point gives us a glimpse (sometimes a mere hint) of what is to come.

<sup>1</sup> For a brief account of these issues with bibliography, see P. E. Easterling, "Philoctetes and Modern Criticism," *Illinois Classical Studies* III (1978) 27–39. For fuller bibliography, see the general treatments of the play in R. P. Winnington-Ingram, *Sophocles: An Interpretation* (Oxford 1980) ch. 12, and C. Segal, *Tragedy and Civilization* (Cambridge, Mass. 1981) chs. 9, 10. In his *Cohérence et continuité dans le théâtre de Sophocle* (Quebec 1981), A. Machin provides an extensive treatment of various forms of contradiction and discontinuity in Sophocles, and includes chapters on Helenus' prophecy, lies in the *Philoctetes*, and the shift of focus between the three central characters. Machin's approach is weakened by its single-mindedness: virtually every form of discontinuity has for him the effect of drawing the audience's attention to the continuous moral evolution of the hero. For a recent reading of the problems of prophecy and ending in light of the play's persistent distortion of information and what she sees as its generic ambiguity, see C. Greengard, *Theatre in Crisis: Sophocles' Reconstruction of Genre and Politics in Philoctetes* (Amsterdam 1987).

<sup>2</sup> Aristotle refers variously to events in the story not actually represented on stage as outside the drama (*Poetics* 1453b32, 1454b3), outside the tragedy (1454b7), outside the story/plot (1455b8, 1460a29), or simply outside (1455b25). There is some indeterminacy in Aristotle's use of these expressions; note however that the events referred to are invariably *mentioned* within the play, not simply assumed.

The subject of this paper is one role that such references play in Sophoclean narrative.<sup>3</sup> As the parenthetical (s) in my subtitle is meant to indicate, it is with the plurality of narratives—and different types of narratives—created by references to past and future that I shall be concerned. Sophocles' gradual introduction of information about the past in his prologues and elsewhere is not only naturalistic, dramatically effective, and an aid to characterization;<sup>4</sup> it also presents past events as part of the different stories of individuals. His presentation of what is outside the drama reminds us not only that a play's story (its plot) is part of a larger story (the encompassing myth) but also that it is the intersection of other and different stories, the stories of its characters.

Multiplicity is not unique to Sophocles. But without suggesting that any of the modes I am about to describe belongs only and always to one tragedian, we might say this: Aeschylus' tragedies (partly, but not exclusively, because of their participation in trilogies) tend to suggest a series of linked stories over time. Euripides' tragedies (especially his later tragedies) tend to suggest a set of competing stories, only one of which the poet has chosen to write.<sup>5</sup> Sophocles' tragedies tend to make us aware that every story is at one and the same time several different stories.

It is often noted that in some of Sophocles' plays (especially the *Antigone*, the *Trachiniae*, and the *Philoctetes*) two characters seem to share the center of dramatic interest. But critical discussion of this fact has most frequently taken the form either of argument over which character really is the hero or of defense of the basic unity of the play in spite of its two central characters.<sup>6</sup> Winnington-Ingram suggests a different approach when he argues that we may see in the *Antigone* "two tragedies unfolding simultaneously: the tragedy of Creon and the tragedy of Antigone," and that these are tragedies of two different types.<sup>7</sup> It is something like this simultaneity I have in mind here, except that my focus is not so much on the dramatic plot as on the different stories which it contains (or, we might equally say, of which it is a part) as they emerge through narration and allusion.

<sup>3</sup> Although the narrative and the dramatic are often seen as distinct modes of presentation, drama both contains narrative and is a kind of narrative in a broader sense; in Richmond Lattimore's common-sense expression, a play is "a kind of story-telling" (*Story Patterns in Greek Tragedy* [Ann Arbor 1969] 2). Although current narratology tends to concentrate on such narrative (in the traditional sense) genres as epic, novel, short story, and history, in theory and sometimes in practice it includes drama among its objects as well. It is for this reason that Paul Ricoeur, for example, uses the term "diegetic composition" for "narrative in the narrow sense" (*Time and Narrative*, vol. 1, tr. K. McLaughlin and D. Pellauer [Chicago 1984] 36).

<sup>4</sup> The view is general, but see especially A. O. Hulton, "The Prologues of Sophocles," *G&R* 16 (1969) 49–59.

<sup>5</sup> Such plays as the *Orestes* and the *Phoenissae* take pains to remind us of the various versions of the story that Euripides is not going to follow. Helene Foley notes that "A late Euripidean play can be as important for the play that it is not as for the one that it is...." (*Ritual Irony* [Ithaca and London] 112).

<sup>6</sup> For a recent defense of unity and continuity in the plays with two or three central characters, see the last section of Machin's book (above, note 1). For a quite different approach, one that claims that modern critics are mistaken in looking for "unity in focus or theme" in tragedy, see M. Heath, *The Poetics of Greek Tragedy* (Stanford 1987) 104 and 90–110.

<sup>7</sup> Winnington-Ingram (above, note 1) 147 and 146–48.

I have been speaking of narratives and stories, and of references to events outside the drama. But according to one common narratological perspective, all past and future events referred to within the play constitute the play's "story"—in Gérard Genette's terms, its "signified or narrative content."<sup>8</sup> These events are simply presented, in the "narrative" (or "discourse") that is the play's text, in a different chronological order from that of their supposed occurrence. At the same time, however, there are narrators and narratives within the play's story, and such narratives tell or suggest stories that take on an integrity of their own; it is with such stories that I am here particularly concerned. My usage of the term "story" is not entirely in keeping with the distinction drawn above between signified content and signifying discourse, since I will sometimes use it (in a more traditional way) to refer at once both to what is told and to how it is told. When however I am concentrating on the level of "how", on the discourse, I will normally use the term "narrative."

## II

I shall here be concentrating on a detailed analysis of the emergence of different stories in the *Philoctetes*. First, however, let me briefly sketch some of the varied ways in which characters' stories are told or suggested in Sophoclean tragedy, with special attention to the *Antigone*.

In some instances we are conscious of different stories because the events narrated are themselves different. In the *Trachiniae*, for example, the separateness of the two main characters is reinforced by the difference between their stories of the past. Deianeira's story emerges through her successive narratives as a story of threatened marriage, threatened rape, and a marriage which is itself an experience of prolonged desertion and repeated infidelity. She mentions Heracles' labors only briefly, as responsible for his absence. In Heracles' story, however, which he belatedly narrates as he is dying, his labors are central, and Deianeira figures only as the last and most fatal of his foes.

Sometimes the past may seem to belong to different stories not because its events are different but because they are believed to be different. In the *Oedipus Tyrannus*, Jocasta and Oedipus tell their separate stories of the distant past: hers is a story about an abandoned child and a husband killed by brigands while travelling; his is a story about a child's uncertainty about his parentage, and the killing of an old man and his entourage on the road. Only one set of events is in fact referred to here, but there are clearly two different stories.

A third possibility is exemplified in the *Antigone*. The opening scenes of this play refer to past events that are the same and are recognized as the same but are differently narrated by the different characters. Antigone addresses the evils of the house of Oedipus in her opening words (1–5), and both here and in what follows she gives the family background this significance: the family's

<sup>8</sup> G. Genette, *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method*, tr. J. E. Lewin (Ithaca 1980) 27. Genette's terms in the French original ("Discours du récit," *Figures III* [Paris 1972]) are *histoire* and *récit*, rendered by Lewin as "story" and "narrative." There is considerable variety in the terminology used for these two levels, perhaps the most common being *histoire* and *discours* ("story" and "discourse"); see for example T. Todorov, "Les catégories du récit littéraire," *Communications* 8 (1966) 125–51, and for a helpful general account of issues and terminology with bibliography S. Chatman, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film* (Ithaca 1978). (Genette adds a third term, *narration*, the act of narrating itself.)

ills are ills shared (and to be shared) by all its members. It is only by burying their brother and thus risking further misfortune that she and Ismene can demonstrate their breeding and show that they are members of their family (37–38). In replying, Ismene lists (49ff.) the miseries and disgraces of the family: Oedipus' crime and his blinding, their mother's suicide, and their brothers' mutual slaughter. In so doing she presents us not only with more detail but also with a shift in the meaning of the past; for her, the family disasters mean that the sisters are now alone, and should at all costs *avoid* a similarly horrible death. What is for Antigone a tale of shared trouble is for Ismene a tale of increasing isolation.

After the scene between the two sisters has reached its conclusion, the chorus of Theban elders enters and tells the story of the battle which has ended just before the play began (100–154). In providing us with more detail about recent events, the chorus reveals itself as a character too, with a story of its own; we note this not just by its reactions, but by what its narration chooses to include or leave out. The chorus's story is the city's story—that is, the chorus recounts the part of the story of the house of Laius that was most filled with danger for the city. The choral ode, in contrast with the sisters' conversation, is essentially a victory song, in which the death of the sons of Oedipus is mentioned almost parenthetically (in a subordinate clause at 143–47) after the chorus speaks of the defeat of the enemy leaders.

With the entry of Creon, immediately following, we are told yet another story about the past (163ff.). The new ruler tells the story of Laius, Oedipus, and the sons of Oedipus as a tale of political succession that commands the loyalty of the citizens.

In the opening scenes of the play, then, we are given four different versions of the past: Antigone's story of a family whose suffering calls for her participation; Ismene's story of a family whose suffering and disgrace call for her self-preservation; the chorus's story of a family whose rivalries nearly brought disaster to the citizens; and Creon's story of a family the continuity of whose rule through all vicissitudes commands continued loyalty.<sup>9</sup>

In the examples I have given so far, characters tell their own stories, thus becoming narrators of stories as well as characters in them. In other instances, however, both extended narrative and a single structuring voice are missing, and a character's story is suggested by various references—not necessarily in his or her own voice—to the past or to the future. These references, since they tend to be allusive and incomplete, do not tell a story so much as they remind the audience of a story it already knows, a story that is tangential to the play's plot. In the *Antigone*, for example, one element in Creon's story is only made known towards the end of the play, and there primarily through the allusive utterances of other characters.

When Tiresias comes to warn Creon of the harm his acts are doing, the following exchange occurs:

Κρ. οὐκ οὖν πάρος γε σῆς ἀπεστάτου φρενός.  
 Τε. τοίγαρ δι' ὀρθῆς τήνδ' ἐναυκλήρεις πόλιν.  
 Κρ. ἔχω πεπονθώς μαρτυρεῖν ὀνήσιμα.  
 Τε. φρόνει βεβῶς αὖ νῦν ἐπὶ ξυροῦ τύχης. (993–96)

<sup>9</sup> We might note further that whereas both Ismene and the chorus see the story of the house of Oedipus as one fraught with danger for bystanders, both Antigone and Creon see it as pointing to a particular commitment to action—for her, loyalty to the family *qua* family; for him, loyalty to the family *qua* ruling house.

These lines seem to allude to some earlier crisis in Creon's and the city's affairs; this supposition is supported by Tiresias' further reminder at 1058 that it is because of him that Creon saved and rules the city.<sup>10</sup> There is, as commentators have noted,<sup>11</sup> a story that will make sense of these allusions, and in the course of the play's final scene the audience will be more forcefully reminded of that story. An earlier hint has already been introduced in the chorus's reference to Haemon at 627 as last (νέατον) of Creon's children; this reference is picked up at 1161–64 by the messenger's calling Creon once happy for (among other things) his noble race of sons.

The messenger's speech is followed by the actual arrival of a hitherto unmentioned character, Creon's wife Eurydice. When she asks for news, her words (1191) seem to express some private suffering beyond the misfortunes of her husband's sister's family: "κακῶν γὰρ οὐκ ἀπειρος οὖς'...." That this is so is made clear when the messenger who has gone to investigate her silent departure reports (1301–5) that after she had raised a cry for the earlier death of her son Megareus, she blamed Creon for the deaths of both her sons.

In Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes*, Megareus is one of the seven defending chieftains. Eteocles' words in sending him forth suggest the possibility of his death, but all we learn of is the success of his defense.<sup>12</sup> The audience of the *Antigone*, however, must have known some version of the story told in Euripides' later *Phoenissae*: that during the battle between the sons of Oedipus, Tiresias revealed that the city's survival depended on the sacrifice of Creon's son (here called Menoeceus). Euripides depicts this as finally a kind of self-sacrifice, and one which Creon, indeed, tries to prevent. But there is no reason to suppose that Euripides' was the only version, and the hints in Sophocles' story certainly seem to suggest some acquiescence on Creon's part. If this is so, then at this point in the *Antigone* we are able both to extend and to revise Creon's story; we must now see it as a repetitive one, in which family is twice subordinated to city and loss of family twice results.<sup>13</sup>

A similar use of allusions to stories known to the audience is common in Sophoclean references to future events, which characteristically hint at a continuation of events past the play's end. I have treated Sophocles' allusions to the future at some length elsewhere,<sup>14</sup> and will do so only briefly here. These

<sup>10</sup> J. C. Kamerbeek notes the significance of αὖ in his commentary (Leiden 1978) ad 996. R. C. Jebb (in his commentary [Cambridge 1900] ad loc.) takes these lines to allude to some instance of Tiresias' advice during the period of Creon's regency implied at the end of the *Oedipus Tyrannus*, but apart from the problem that we cannot assume such a period as background for this play, the tradition tells of no other crisis than the siege of Thebes. I here accept (with Jebb and Kamerbeek) Valckenaer's τήνδ' ἐναυκλήρει; elsewhere I have used A.C. Pearson's OCT of Sophocles (Oxford 1924).

<sup>11</sup> See for example L. Campbell's commentary (Oxford 1879) vol. 1, ad 995, 1058, 1303, and Kamerbeek (above, note 10) ad 995, 1058, 1303; cf. also Jebb (above, note 10) ad 1303 and Segal (above, note 1) 194 and note 24.

<sup>12</sup> *Seven Against Thebes* 472–79, 799.

<sup>13</sup> Segal notes this story's association with the "conflict between polis values and *oikos* values" (above, note 1, 194 and note 24).

<sup>14</sup> D. H. Roberts, "Sophoclean Endings: Another Story," *Arethusa* 21 (1988) 177–96. On Sophocles' allusions to a future beyond the play, see also Winnington-Ingram (above, note 1) 302 and note 70; O. Taplin, "Sophocles in his Theatre," *Sophocle, Entretiens Hardt* 29 (Geneva 1983) 155–74; and bibliography on specific plays cited in Roberts. For a skeptical account of the impact

allusions (which occur in some form in all extant plays) show that although the play's story is over, there is a story that still remains to be told, usually about someone other than the play's main character; this story may undercut or act as an ironic foil to the play's conclusion. When in the *Ajax* Teucer learns of his brother's death, he expresses (1006–20) his fear that his father will exile him, a fear the audience knows is to be fulfilled. In the *Antigone*, Tiresias' words about the anger of the surrounding cities (1080–84) foreshadow the Athenian expedition Euripides portrays in his *Suppliants*, and perhaps the war of the Epigoni as well. At the end of the *Oedipus at Colonus*, Antigone announces her intention of returning to Thebes to try to make peace between her brothers (1768–72), a return the audience expects will result in her death.

Characters' stories, then, are revealed to be intertwined in, but not identical with, the plot of the play itself. These stories may be told by the characters themselves, but they may also emerge from a sequence of references to past and future. However these multiple stories are conveyed, they are told in such a way as to create a kind of unity. Scattered references to past and future reveal patterns not fully developed in the action; Creon's story, for example, is given a new and revised coherence towards the end of the play. But note too that as narrators characters seek to tell coherent stories. Heracles makes Deianeira into another monster for him to fight; Jocasta believes that her story continues to demonstrate the unreliability of oracles; Antigone seeks a worthy continuation of her family's story.

### III

These themes of multiplicity of stories and of coherence within stories will emerge with clarity if we look closely at Sophocles' particularly complex use of narrative in the *Philoctetes*.<sup>15</sup> In his discussion of the *Philoctetes*, Reinhardt observes that Sophocles has moved away from an epic or narrative mode of conveying information in his earlier plays (such as the *Ajax* or the *Trachiniae*)

of allusions in tragedy, and in particular of the allusions to the future seen by some in the endings of Sophocles' *Trachiniae* and *Electra*, see T. C. W. Stinton, "The Scope and Limits of Allusion in Greek Tragedy," *Greek Tragedy and its Legacy: Essays Presented to D. J. Conacher*, eds. M. Cropp, E. Fantham, S. E. Scully (Calgary 1986) 67–102.

<sup>15</sup> Many critics have of course given some attention to the presence of false or incomplete narrative in the play in their discussions of Neoptolemus' story about Achilles' arms, the false merchant's speeches, and the various versions of Helenus' prophecy. The role of narrative has been given greater prominence in some recent readings. In his article "Neoptolemos' Story in the *Philoctetes*," *AJP* 96 (1975) 131–37, R. Hamilton gives an interesting and persuasive account of the roles of Neoptolemus' story and Heracles' story as models for action in the *Philoctetes*. Greengard (above, note 1) comments at length on the importance of narrative and of its distortions in the first part of the play (up to the end of the merchant scene). She lays particular stress on the audience's inability fully to distinguish truth from fiction, on the power of narrative to create its own reality, and on Sophocles' "use of dramatic narrative to confuse rather than clarify, to frustrate rather than enable judgment..." (26). On the related issues of speech and communication in the play see esp. A. J. Podlecki, "The Power of the Word in Sophocles' *Philoctetes*," *GRBS* 7 (1966) 233–50 and Segal (above, note 1) ch. 10. Most recently, on truth and falsehood, word and deed, see O. Taplin, "The Mapping of Sophocles' *Philoctetes*," *BICS* 34 (1987) 69–72.

to a more dramatic mode, and this is to some extent true.<sup>16</sup> But what Reinhardt sees as dramatic may also be seen as drama's exploration of the varied possibilities of narrative. In the *Philoctetes*, where the central story is that of the fetching of Philoctetes and his bow from Lemnos, the references to past and future point not only to the larger story of the Trojan war but to the stories of Odysseus, Philoctetes, Neoptolemus, and Heracles. In this play, however, we will be concerned not so much with the different events in these stories as with the sorts of stories they are and the way they are told, that is, with the nature of the narrative. Each character's story is problematic in a different way, and the characters' stories reflect the different relationship for each character between past, present, and future.

*Odysseus' story and Odysseus' story-telling*

Odysseus is the play's first narrator, a role appropriate to this traditional teller of stories. But the opening narrative of Odysseus' own role in Philoctetes' abandonment is marked by both denial and interruption:

Ἀκτὴ μὲν ἦδε τῆς περιρρύτου χθονὸς  
 Λήμνου, βροτοῖς ἄστιπτος οὐδ' οἰκουμένη,  
 ἔνθ', ὃ κρατίστου πατρὸς Ἑλλήνων τραφεῖς  
 Ἀχιλλέως παῖ Νεοπτόλεμε, τὸν Μηλιά  
 Ποῖαντος υἱὸν ἐξέθηκ' ἐγὼ ποτε,  
 ταχθεὶς τόδ' ἔρδειν τῶν ἀνασσόντων ὕπο,  
 νόσω καταστάζοντα διαβόρῳ πόδα·  
 ὅτ' οὔτε λοιβῆς ἡμῖν οὔτε θυμάτων  
 παρῇν ἐκήλοις προσθιγεῖν, ἀλλ' ἀγρίαις  
 κατεῖχ' ἀεὶ πᾶν στρατόπεδον δυσφημίαις,  
 βοῶν, στενάζων. ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν τί δεῖ  
 λέγειν; ἀκμὴ γὰρ οὐ μακρῶν ἡμῖν λόγων... (1–12)

The emphatic ἐγὼ of line 5 asserts Odysseus' active role in this story, but the line that follows makes of him a mere agent. After a few lines of self-justifying description of Philoctetes' condition, Odysseus breaks off his narrative with the words (11–12), "But why should I speak of this? We don't have time for long speeches."<sup>17</sup>

In the exchange that follows, Odysseus mentions one more feature of his past, a feature whose full significance will not appear until later: unlike Neoptolemus, he is one of those who sailed under oath, out of necessity, with the original expedition to Troy:

σὺ μὲν πέπλευκας οὔτ' ἔνορκος οὐδενὶ  
 οὔτ' ἐξ ἀνάγκης οὔτε τοῦ πρώτου στόλου... (72–73)

As commentators have noted, the words ἐξ ἀνάγκης may remind us that Odysseus traditionally was compelled to join the expedition after an attempted evasion. Odysseus is saying that Neoptolemus, being under no oath, will be

<sup>16</sup> K. Reinhardt, *Sophocles*, tr. H. and D. Harvey (Oxford 1979).

<sup>17</sup> In his commentary ad loc. (Cambridge 1970), T. B. L. Webster cites parallels to Odysseus' breaking off of speech in Sophocles' *Electra* (22, 1335), but neither of these is quite as abrupt. Machin (above, note 1) 87 suggests that the breaking off reflects Odysseus' discomfort with his past actions, Jebb (above, note 10) ad loc. that it may be a comment on an over-long prologue in some earlier version.

able to convince Philoctetes that he is leaving Troy.<sup>18</sup> But the lines also suggest a disjunction between Odysseus' forced participation and his present zeal.<sup>19</sup>

From this point on, Odysseus tells no more stories himself, but instead provides stories partly congruent with the truth for Neoptolemus and the merchant.<sup>20</sup> These inventions are reminiscent of Odysseus' false stories in the *Odyssey* both in their content and in their usage. Like the stories Homer's Odysseus tells on Ithaca, they mingle truth with falsehood and present multiple images of Odysseus' real activities; like those stories they reflect the teller's distrust and caution. We might even say that a certain near-excessiveness in the case of the merchant's two stories suggests (like Odysseus' lie to his father in *Odyssey* 24) that story-telling may be habitual and obsessive.

Odysseus' initial narrative of his own past, then, is abbreviated and interrupted; it raises questions about his presence on the expedition to Troy and his role in Philoctetes' abandonment. He turns thereafter to a proliferation of stories about his own actions which are much more fully narrated (by others) but in which truth blends with falsehood in a way not always easy to determine.

*Philoctetes' story and the story that is no longer his*

Philoctetes tells his own story to Neoptolemus at 254ff. This narration begins in a kind of reversal of the *Odyssey*.<sup>21</sup> In Book 9 of Homer's poem, Odysseus, who has just had the bard sing a song about the Trojan horse, begins his narrative with a confident reference to his own *kleos*, sure that although he has been so recently a naked beggar his true identity is renowned (19–20). In Sophocles' play, Philoctetes has heartbreakingly (and falsely) been given to understand by Neoptolemus that neither his name nor the *kleos* of his misfortunes is still spoken of among the Greeks. Wretched in this belief, he begins (261–62) with something he thinks Neoptolemus may have heard of, his possession of the bow of Heracles, and follows this immediately with the story of his wounding and abandonment.

Philoctetes' narrative, however, makes a notable shift after he relates the first shock of his abandonment; this shift is introduced by the words (285), "ὁ μὲν χρόνος δὴ διὰ χρόνου προύβαινέ μοι...." What follows is the account of Philoctetes' life on Lemnos, unmarked by any recognizable sequence in time or by any individual—that is, non-repeated—events. Primarily told in the imperfect and the historical present, this tale is one of tending a wound, getting food, laboriously lighting fires, and meeting with occasional accidental and fruitless visits from passing ships.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>18</sup> See Kamerbeek (above, note 10) and Webster (above, note 17) ad loc.

<sup>19</sup> That the contrast may be traditional is suggested by Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* 841–2; this does not mean that the force of the contrast must always be the same.

<sup>20</sup> On Odysseus as source of other narratives, indeed as competing playwright, see Greengard (above, note 1) 25 and note 16.

<sup>21</sup> For other parallels between the *Philoctetes* and the *Odyssey*, see Greengard (above, note 1) esp. 63–66.

<sup>22</sup> It has been argued that there is a progression in Philoctetes' story that reflects sophistic accounts of the early development of humankind, and that in this context "his laborious achievement of fire is made the climactic item in his triumph over the most elemental forces of destruction" (P. Rose, "Sophocles' *Philoctetes* and the Teachings of the Sophists," *HSCP* 80 (1976) 49–105). But it is important to note that although Philoctetes' narrative may resonate with the anthropological account by the order in which things are mentioned, Sophocles



Thus, believing that the story of his misfortunes is unknown, Philoctetes proceeds to tell it, only to reveal that as soon as he dropped out of the story of the Greeks, the story of his own life—lacking sequence or any particular structure in time—became a story without temporal order and without movement towards an end, an interminable middle.<sup>23</sup> Again we may find a parallel in Homer. Odysseus' narrative to the Phaeacians ends when it brings him back to Calypso's island (12.450)—partly, as he says, because he has already spoken of his stay there, but also, clearly, because there is nothing really to tell; seven undifferentiated years on an island do not make a story, and neither Odysseus nor the narrator ever gives those seven years more than a few lines. Philoctetes speaks like an Odysseus who has never been anywhere but Calypso's island.

Philoctetes' absence from the story of Troy is marked in the *Iliad* itself by the lines in the catalogue of ships (2.716–25) that both include and exclude the missing hero (who shares this treatment with Protesilaus and Achilles, both once present but absent by the tenth year). There is a kind of catalogue in this play too, in the passages in which through question and answer Neoptolemus tells Philoctetes' part of the story of the Greeks at Troy (410–45). The obvious and often cited effect of this interchange is to strengthen Philoctetes' distrust of a world in which the good die or suffer, while the wicked live and thrive. But there is a further effect which could only have been produced by having the story told in dialogue, and this is the stress on Philoctetes' separation from the story of the Greeks and the difference between his story and theirs.

Philoctetes has learned from Neoptolemus that Achilles is dead, and has been told that Achilles' son was robbed of his father's arms. Now he asks (410–11) how such a thing could have happened with Ajax there, and learns that Ajax was already dead. Philoctetes' question suggests a reversal that strikingly reveals his ignorance of the order of events, since the audience presumably knows that Ajax's death was caused by the very thing he is now imagined as preventing, that is, Odysseus' possession of Achilles' arms. A similar reversal follows. After learning to his sorrow that Diomedes and Odysseus are alive, and that Nestor's son Antilochus is dead, Philoctetes asks after Patroclus (433–34). Neoptolemus explains that he too is dead. Here again, for those who know the *Iliad*, Philoctetes' ignorance creates a sense of disorder, for Patroclus' death is bound up with Achilles' death in the fixed, indeed prophesied sequence of death: Patroclus, Hector, Achilles (as indeed Antilochus' death belongs to the parallel sequence of Antilochus, Memnon, and Achilles).

Philoctetes' final question—is Thersites still alive?—again appears to ignore the traditional order, since, at least in the *Aethiopis*, Achilles was said to have killed Thersites.<sup>24</sup> Here, however, Sophocles may be surprising the audience; Neoptolemus says he has heard that Thersites is still alive. It is difficult to know what to make of this claim: is Neoptolemus lying (to complete the

avoids any actual temporal sequence within the story. The production of fire does not mark a particular moment of discovery; it is one of a number of repetitions in Philoctetes' life on Lemnos. On the force of the language in 295–97 see esp. Campbell (above, note 11) ad loc.

<sup>23</sup> I do not mean to slight the significance of Philoctetes' account of his life on Lemnos for our reading of the play, but rather to focus on one feature of that account, its narrative form.

<sup>24</sup> According to Proclus' *Chrestomathia* (OCT of Homer, vol. 5, ed. T. W. Allen [Oxford 1912] 105).

unhappy picture he has painted for Philoctetes)? Is Sophocles using an alternative version (for the same purpose, but with a somewhat different effect)?<sup>25</sup> There is no need here to adjudicate between these possibilities; an audience with the epic cycle in mind at this point experiences some dislocation, and loses momentarily its position of superior knowledge. We too can no longer be certain of the sequence of things in time; it is as if the lack of such sequence in Philoctetes' story were contagious.

Since Philoctetes' abandonment, time has gone on for the Greeks, and events have happened and been connected with each other in a particular order, the order of the well-known story of Troy. But to this order Philoctetes has no access. This exchange about the heroes, then, underscores Philoctetes' absence from the progress of the larger story to which he once belonged; it also, I think, underscores his absence from a story that is more of a *story*—for all its horrors—than he can make of his life on the island.

*Neoptolemus' narrative of Odysseus' story about Neoptolemus*

The story Neoptolemus tells Philoctetes (343–81) is a combination of the recent events in his life and the fiction that Odysseus has suggested to him at 58–65. Odysseus and Phoenix, he says, came to get him from Scyros, telling him that since his father was dead, it was not *themis* that anyone but him take Troy. He came eagerly, both to see his dead father and for the sake of the conquest. Everyone greeted him, and after he had wept for his father, he went to the sons of Atreus and asked for the arms of Achilles. They replied that Odysseus had them, and when he went to Odysseus, Odysseus justified his possession and would not give them back. Insulted, Neoptolemus left.

Scholarly opinion on the truth of Neoptolemus' tale ranges from total dismissal to acceptance even of the central matter of the arms.<sup>26</sup> The evidence that the refusal of the arms at least is meant to be seen as a lie is strong; after all, Odysseus has virtually identified it as one, and it seems unlikely that he would have refused the arms to someone crucial for victory, or that Neoptolemus would now be with him had he done so. But the story Neoptolemus tells here is then so clearly a mixture of truth and falsehood that we have no way of identifying more than the most minimal facts in Neoptolemus' past. As is characteristic of lying stories in Sophocles (compare the tale of Orestes' death in the *Electra*), the story is told with as much detail and power of expression as any true report could be.<sup>27</sup> Finally, it may be argued that although we cannot easily tell fact from fiction in this story, Neoptolemus makes the story into his true

<sup>25</sup> On the evidence and the argument see esp. G. Huxley, "Thersites in Sophocles, *Philoctetes* 445," *GRBS* 8 (1967) 33–34. If we take W. M. Calder's view that Neoptolemus has not yet been to Troy when he comes to Lemnos with Odysseus, then Neoptolemus may simply be ignorant, though Calder prefers to see him as lying ("Sophoclean Apologia: *Philoctetes*," *GRBS* 12 [1971] 153–74).

<sup>26</sup> Calder (above, note 25) takes the whole speech to be a lie; S. M. Adams, *Sophocles the Playwright* (*Phoenix* supplement, Toronto 1957) takes the opposite view. Others have taken intermediate positions. See also Hamilton (above, note 15) and Greengard (above, note 1) 5–6, 23–24.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Greengard (above, note 1) 23–24: "Neoptolemus' skillful blend of dramatic 'truth' and 'fiction' and of contradictory epic sources well-known to the audience creates an internally consistent story that has the power of a new myth.... This new myth creates its own sense of reality despite the audience's full knowledge of its deceptive origin and its deceptive objective."

past by not retracting it, even in the candor of the closing scenes (1364–65), and by being prepared in the end to act as if it were true.<sup>28</sup>

*The merchant as story-teller with no story; Helenus as privileged narrator and mere character*

In the course of the first third of the play, each of the plays' three central characters tells a story about himself, and each of these narratives seems in some sense inadequate. The next story we are given (although it affects the action) makes little contribution to the emergence of the play's intersecting stories but develops the theme of the problematic nature of narrative. The "merchant" has, next to Neoptolemus, the longest stretch of narrative in the play; but he may be said in two different senses to be a narrator without a story of his own. In the first place, the stories he tells are presumably composed by Odysseus rather than by their speaker. In the second, these stories are to a great extent about others, and the audience knows that the "merchant's" few words about himself are, like much of the rest of what he says, fictional; they are not really about the man who speaks them, since he is in fact no true merchant but a sailor in disguise (127–29).

For the most part this new narrator only embroiders falsely on what the audience already knows, but he does tell one story the audience has not heard before, the story of the capture and prophecy of Helenus (603–13).<sup>29</sup> In telling this story, he introduces us to someone who is twice the subject of narration (here and by Neoptolemus at 1337–42), and who is himself a narrator, since he recounts other people's futures in the form of his variously reported prophecy about Troy's fall and the Greeks' need for Philoctetes. Rather than embarking on another analysis of what Helenus really said or of what Neoptolemus knew and when he knew it, I wish simply to draw attention here to the significance of Helenus' position as narrator and narrated. Helenus is on the one hand (until Heracles appears) a uniquely privileged narrator of the future, since he is a seer; the story he tells must therefore have a peculiar validity, and it is also one for which he is said to have vouched with his life (1341–42). On the other hand, Helenus does not appear in the play and thus never tells his own story to us; he remains a character narrated by others. Indeed, his story is first told us by a narrator who is not what he seems to be, telling stories constructed by someone else who is himself a master of story-telling and deception. Our difficulties with Helenus' prophecy are thus related to the tension in his position: he is a figure of authority for true narrative, but distanced from us by narrative of uncertain reliability.<sup>30</sup>

*Philoctetes' story, Heracles' story, Odysseus' story.*

After his opening narrative Philoctetes makes a few more references to his past before being abandoned on the island. The first three concern his connection with Heracles, the last concerns his connection with Odysseus and the Trojan expedition. In each case he not only speaks of the past but draws an analogy between the past and the present.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Taplin (above, note 15) 70. On Neoptolemus' false story as a model for the action of the play, for which Heracles' story is eventually substituted, see Hamilton (above, note 15).

<sup>29</sup> Odysseus has alluded to this prophecy but not to its source at 113.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Greengard (above, note 1) 25–26.

At 670 Philoctetes tells Neoptolemus that he too obtained the bow by doing a good deed, and at 777 he hopes that the bow will not be a source of trouble for Neoptolemus as it was for him and for Heracles. Finally, at lines 799–803, in the agony of his wound, Philoctetes begs Neoptolemus to burn him with the fire of Lemnos, as he once burnt Heracles in return for the weapon which Neoptolemus now holds. These passages link Philoctetes' past with his present; they also tell Heracles' story as well as Philoctetes', and (as Richard Hamilton has stressed) draw an analogy between Heracles' story and Philoctetes' story.<sup>31</sup>

A reference to Philoctetes' participation in the story of the Trojan expedition occurs at 1019–28. Now bereft of his bow and confronted by the demands of Odysseus, Philoctetes contrasts his original voluntary voyage to Troy with Odysseus' forced participation.

ὄλοιο· καί σοι πολλάκις τόδ' ἠϋξάμην.  
 ἀλλ' οὐ γὰρ οὐδὲν θεοὶ νέμουσιν ἡδὺ μοι,  
 σὺ μὲν γέγηθας ζῶν, ἐγὼ δ' ἀλγύνομαι  
 τοῦτ' αὐθ' ὅτι ζῶ σὺν κακοῖς πολλοῖς τάλας,  
 γελῶμενος πρὸς σοῦ τε καὶ τῶν Ἀτρείδω  
 διπλῶν στρατηγῶν, οἷς σὺ ταῦθ' ὑπηρετεῖς.  
 καίτοι σὺ μὲν κλοπῇ τε κἀνάγκῃ ζυγεῖς  
 ἔπλεις ἅμ' αὐτοῖς, ἐμὲ δὲ τὸν πανάθλιον  
 ἔκοντα πλεύσανθ' ἐπὶ ναυσὶ ναυβάτην  
 ἄτιμον ἔβαλον, ὥς σὺ φής, κείνοι δὲ σέ.

The most obvious point of these lines is the central contrast Philoctetes makes: the leaders of the expedition treated the conscript well, the volunteer badly. But there is more going on here. Philoctetes elaborates slightly on Odysseus' prologue story, and to Odysseus' disadvantage: he emphasizes that Odysseus had to be forced to come to Troy, and casts doubt on Odysseus' version by noting that if Odysseus blames the Atreidae for what was done they likewise blame him. His language further suggests an implicit contrast not only between the earlier events of Odysseus' story and his own but between Odysseus' past behavior and his own present behavior. The word κλοπῇ here applies to the trick that led Odysseus to abandon his own trickery and join the Trojan expedition; but it is more strikingly appropriate (with its sense of theft as well as ruse) to the prospect that now faces Philoctetes—who would himself never be brought by a trick or theft to serve the Atreidae.

Philoctetes, then, sees elements of his own story both in Heracles' story and in Odysseus' story. He rejects the parallel with the latter, but accepts the parallel with the former.<sup>32</sup> We may also note that both as narrator and as subject of narration Philoctetes looks for coherence: as story-teller, he shows us the continuity between stories; as the sufferer within the stories, he marks Odysseus and the Atreidae with lack of consistency.

*Heracles' narrative of his own past and everyone else's future.*

The future looms over this play from the very first, in the form of the prophecy (or prophecies) about what is required for Troy's fated fall. The

<sup>31</sup> See Hamilton (above, note 15) 135–36.

<sup>32</sup> Hamilton (above, note 15) argues that Philoctetes' self-conscious enactment of Heracles' story, reflected in the passages here cited, prepares him to accept that story in the end as a model for action, and thus to acquiesce (rightly) in Heracles' commands.

information that has emerged in the course of the play is presented more fully and with more authority in Heracles' words in the closing scene.

After an anapestic passage calling the heroes to halt and listen (1409–17), Heracles begins his iambs by telling his own story:

καὶ πρῶτα μὲν σοι τὰς ἐμὰς λέξω τύχας,  
ὅσους πονήσας καὶ διεξελθὼν πόνους  
ἀθάνατον ἀρετὴν ἔσχον, ὥς πάρεσθ' ὄραν.

The language seems at first to suggest that the story of Heracles' labors will follow, but after these three lines Heracles turns his attention to his hearers and their stories. Brevity here, however, does not entail interruption; Heracles gives us his story in the form of a synopsis, brief but complete. The completeness is stressed by the syntax, in which the labors are subordinated to their result; what is more, that result provides no provisional or temporary conclusion, but an immortal one. His own story dealt with, Heracles provides conclusions for the stories of others.<sup>33</sup> And here too, as in the stories told by Odysseus, Philoctetes, and Neoptolemus, there is a significance not only in the events narrated but in the narrative mode. For where a Euripidean *deus ex machina* gives all that follows the same narrative status, the future that Heracles predicts includes distinct events distinctly narrated.

Or not narrated. For Odysseus, no future is mentioned at all. He is, we must know, one of the Greeks who will take Troy, but where a Euripidean *deus* would provide futures for every character in the vicinity, Heracles omits any mention of Odysseus' famous stratagem. Troy appears to fall without the horse or its inventor. The narrator who broke off his own story, and whose story lacks connectedness, is thus not only absent at the end of the play but lacks any narrated future.

For Philoctetes, Heracles provides a future which is at odds with his recent intentions but neatly consistent with the more distant past. His own first mention of himself as the possessor of Heracles' bow will be completed by his offering of the spoils at the temple of Heracles; his initial willing presence on the expedition will be completed by his participation in the fall of Troy. Philoctetes will not only rejoin society, as many have noted, but will also rejoin the story from which he was dropped. What is more, he will bring about this story's end. Indeed, his actions may be said to connect its beginning and its end, since he will both sack the city and kill Paris, the one originally responsible (αἴτιος, 1426) for the war. For all its disjunction with the immediate past, the future here provided for Philoctetes gives his story a particular coherence and a strong sense of closure. Furthermore, it is more completely narrated (and with more authority) than the future of any other Sophoclean character.

Neoptolemus' story lacks such closure and such completeness. It is true that with Philoctetes, he will take Troy. But the general warning Heracles gives

<sup>33</sup> It may be added that Heracles' own story is not suppressed so much as recalled in the narrative that follows. Some scholars have in fact argued that a long account of Heracles' life is unnecessary precisely because the point lies in the analogy between the trajectory of his life and that of Philoctetes. See Webster (above, note 17) ad loc. and Hamilton (above, note 15) 136, who notes that "The parallelism between the two of them is so clear..." that Heracles has no need to relate at length either his story or the reward it brought him. On Heracles' story as a model for Philoctetes' story, see esp. Hamilton; on Heracles' speech in relation to the problems of speech in this play see esp. Podlecki (above, note 15) 244–45.

at 1440–41 has seemed to many readers to suggest that something else, and something more distressing, awaits Neoptolemus.

τοῦτο δ' ἐννοεῖσθ', ὅταν  
πορθῇτε γαῖαν, εὐσεβεῖν τὰ πρὸς θεούς.

The Greeks must be careful to respect the gods in their sack of Troy, says Heracles; this may remind the audience of the tradition that Neoptolemus himself will be particularly guilty in this respect, and will disregard Heracles' advice by killing Priam on the altar.<sup>34</sup> Note, however, that Heracles does not *tell* us this; he does not make of Neoptolemus' future a story within the play's story by recounting it fully as he does with Philoctetes'. As I have argued elsewhere, the ending of Neoptolemus' story is one that remains firmly in the future, for us as well as for the characters, and is still possessed of uncertainty, embryonic, not yet to be narrated.<sup>35</sup>

#### IV

As I noted at the start, no other aspect of the play is more often discussed than the double ending of the play's central story and the varied stories about Helenus' oracles. But we may say in a more general sense that stories and story-telling are both central and problematic in this play. If the *Iliad* and the epic cycle provide the background story, and some models for the action of this play (such as the embassy to Achilles in Book 9), the *Odyssey* is the model for the importance and complexity of stories in the play.<sup>36</sup> References to the future in the *Philoctetes* combine straightforward prediction with omission and allusion; accounts of the past undergo fictionalization, suppression, and loss of narrative sequence. The stories Odysseus tells about his past are either incomplete and disconnected or partly false. Philoctetes' story lacks the structure in time of a good story. Neoptolemus' story, like all those Odysseus suggests, is an uncertain mixture of true and false. Heracles' story is a synopsis rather than a full narrative.

That these stories are problematic does not, however, deprive them of power. Odysseus' false stories proliferate and affect the action. The lack of order in Philoctetes' story threatens to disrupt the well-known order of events at Troy. Neoptolemus' reluctance to take back his lie about his father's arms contributes to the play's first ending and its near-departure from the traditional story. And as Hamilton has argued, Heracles' story replaces Neoptolemus' story as a paradigm for action and serves as the model for the ending Philoctetes finally accepts.<sup>37</sup>

These different stories find (in Heracles' speech) differently appropriate endings. Odysseus broke off his opening story, and the end of his story, although

<sup>34</sup> See esp. works cited in note 14 above; cf. also Easterling (above, note 1) and Taplin (above, note 15) 75–76. For an extensive account of the tradition on Neoptolemus' behavior at Troy, see C. Fuqua, "Studies in the Use of Myth in Sophocles' *Philoctetes* and the *Orestes* of Euripides," *Traditio* 1976 (32) 32–43.

<sup>35</sup> See D. H. Roberts (above, note 14).

<sup>36</sup> On the embassy, see esp. C. R. Beye, "Sophocles' *Philoctetes* and the Homeric Embassy," *TAPA* 101 (1970) 63–75; for further bibliography on Iliadic parallels, see Hamilton, who takes issue with their centrality (above, note 15) nn. 2–4 on 131–32. On the role of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* as generic models for this play, see Greengard (above, note 1) esp. 63–66.

<sup>37</sup> Hamilton (above, note 15).

well-known to the audience, is correspondingly suppressed. Philoctetes' story on the island has lost any sense of temporal structure or sequence; returning to his original story, he seems to grasp beginning and ending at once. The story of Neoptolemus' past is partly invented and partly true, partly his own and partly Odysseus'; he seems to be deciding whether or not to accept it as his past. His future is similarly indeterminate, with hints of dangerous possibility.

As for Heracles' story, it is clearly already at an end before Heracles appears in the play, and the synopsis given here stresses that end. Indeed, we might say that Heracles' authority derives not so much from his current divinity as from his peculiar status as former mortal; he is, that is to say, a mortal who is actually able to look back at the end of the story of his own life and make the judgment which, traditional wisdom tells us, can only be made at the end, a judgment which, therefore, no ordinary mortal can make on his or her own story.

Mortals cannot see their own stories as coherent wholes, but they can look for coherence in them, or seek to make them coherent. There is a striking contrast in this respect between Philoctetes and Odysseus. For Philoctetes, there is or should be a coherence between past, present and future; in particular, the past powerfully controls both present and future. The Atreidae treated him badly in the past; how can he expect anything different (1358–60)? And how can he act otherwise than in accordance with his own past experiences? For Odysseus, on the other hand, the past can generally be disregarded, and the present is at the service of, but detachable from the future. Neoptolemus, he says (83–85) should act with him for one shameful day, and then forever after be called pious. He himself can be whatever the occasion demands (1049), and even his declaration that victory is the thing he consistently seeks is immediately undercut by his excepting the present struggle to bring Philoctetes to Troy (1051–52); he will give in and take only the bow. Neoptolemus in this as in other senses is between the two. He does not despise or ignore the relationship of past, present, and future, but it takes him some time to find out what this relationship means for him. Odysseus seeks to make him fit the present to the hoped-for future; in the end, he shows himself willing to alter present and future action in keeping with past agreements and stories, even those meant to be deceptive.

I return once more to the end of the play. I have already suggested that the ending of each character's story is appropriate in some way to the problems of that story. It is also true that the play's ending comments on the question of coherence in each character's story.

For Neoptolemus, the ending disconcertingly hints that the coherent pattern a person has attained at one stage of his life is not necessarily one that will persist. The earnest, respectful and wise Neoptolemus, finally true to his father and to himself, may find out that the story finally told about him is the story of a sacrilegious killing. For Philoctetes, the ending shows that the coherence mortals seek in their own lives is not necessarily the coherence they will find in them. Endeavoring to make his future true to his past suffering and hatred for the Atreidae and Odysseus, Philoctetes neglects other elements of his fortunes, and it is of these that Heracles constructs his ending. For Odysseus, the ending shows that to seek an end alone, in disregard of inner coherence, is not to seek or attain a unified life or story. Odysseus loses his own familiar ending, and is in Heracles' version as absent from the story of the Greeks at Troy as Philoctetes earlier believed himself to be. Paradoxically, this reading gives to Odysseus' story a kind of coherent incoherence; but that too is appropriate.

## V

This paper has told a story about multiplicity and unity: the multiplicity of characters' stories within and beyond the drama, and the unity these stories attain. Let me stress here that the unity of the plot as a whole—of the play's story—is not in my view undercut by its inclusion of different stories with beginnings and endings that are not necessarily the same as the play's. These stories perhaps foreshadow the subplot of later tragedy, but lead an even less separate existence; they intersect in the main plot, and a large part of their action (the dramatized middle with which I have not here been concerned) is identical with that of the main plot. Their existence as different stories is a largely a function of their being (at intervals in the play's course) differently told or alluded to. The audience's consequent awareness of multiplicity is subtle and not disruptive.

But Sophocles' attention to characters' different stories points to what has become something of a commonplace of narratology: that human beings constantly construct their lives and the lives of others as narratives, with beginnings, middles, and ends, and that it is not only literary works that tell stories. I would argue, then, that we see in Sophocles not only the narrative ordering of human life, but a reflection of what many have seen as a fundamental human desire for ordering life as narrative. As Peter Brooks puts it:

Our lives are ceaselessly intertwined with narrative, with the stories that we tell and hear told, those we dream or imagine or would like to tell, all of which are reworked in that story of our own lives that we narrate to ourselves in an episodic, sometimes semi-conscious, but virtually uninterrupted monologue. We live immersed in narrative, recounting and reassessing the meaning of our past actions, anticipating the outcome of our future projects, situating ourselves at the intersection of several stories not yet completed.<sup>38</sup>

If in his tragedies generally Sophocles makes us conscious of the way in which human lives are narrated by those who live them, then it is in the *Philoctetes* that he most fully explores the dynamics of different sorts of narratives and of different modes of coherence and incoherence in these narratives.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>38</sup> P. Brooks, *Reading for the Plot: Design and Intention in Narrative* (New York 1985) 3; see also esp. Chs. 1, 2, 4. According to some narratologists, our construction of our lives as narrative is not accidental; Ricoeur, for example, sees a fundamental relationship between narrative and the temporality of existence; he argues that "literature would be incomprehensible if it did not give a configuration to what was already a figure in human action" (above, note 3) 64.

<sup>39</sup> Earlier versions of this paper were presented as part of a seminar on the *Philoctetes* at the 1986 meeting of the APA in San Antonio, and at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. I am grateful to Seth Schein, who organized the APA seminar, to the participants, and to those present on both occasions for their helpful questions and comments; my thanks also to the anonymous readers for *TAPA*.