

Are There Fragments from Aeschylus Among the Anonymous Tragic Book-Fragments?

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Abstract This paper examines 19 book-fragments in Kannicht and Snell's edition of the *fragmenta tragica adespota* (*TrGF II*) that have been attributed to Aeschylus at different times. It concludes that only three of these fragments (trag. adesp. fr. 208, 291 and 301 K.-Sn.) can be plausibly attributed to Aeschylus.

Keywords Aeschylus. Fragmenta tragica adespota. Authorship. Fragmentary tragedy. Greek tragedy.

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To Alex Garvie, in remembrance

1 The Problem

Of the seventy-three to ninety plays attributed to Aeschylus in Alexandria (Aesch. test. 1, 50-1, test. 2, 6-7, test. 78 Radt),¹ seven complete tragedies and 489 fragments have survived to this day. Of these, around 870 lines are legible. While this may seem like a lot, a simple comparison will put it into perspective: it is approximately half the number of lines in *Agamemnon*. Assuming an average of around 1,100 lines per drama,² this equates to roughly one per cent of the total number of lines that we can estimate Aeschylus wrote (80,300-99,000). These figures are clearly only approximate, but they are still not very encouraging.

The sands of Egypt have not been particularly kind to Aeschylus's admirers so far, especially when compared to Euripides. No new lines by Aeschylus have been found in a papyrus for many years. But what about those tragic book-fragments that have been transmitted without an author's name? Are there any Aeschylean fragments among them? Logic dictates that there must be. There is no need to exaggerate the temptation to try to increase this meagre output by searching for new Aeschylean fragments among them. However, as with any temptation, there is a risk of doing more harm than good.

In their index of *adespota ex coniectura certis poetis attributa*, Kannicht and Snell record that 40 fragments have been attributed to Aeschylus at various times by a number of scholars, with varying degrees of probability.³ Thirty of them are book-fragments. In this

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1 Due to significant discrepancies between the *Vita* (Aesch. test. 1 R.), the Suda entry (Aesch. test. 2 R.) and the so-called Catalogue (Aesch. test. 78 R.), it is impossible to determine the exact figure. See Radt 1985, 35 *ad loc.*; Lucas de Dios 2008, 7-10.

2 *Persians*: 1077 lines; *Seven Against Thebes*: 1078 lines; *Suppliant Women*: 1073 lines; *Agamemnon*: 1673 lines; *Libation Bearers*: 1076 lines; *Eumenides*: 1047 lines; *Prometheus Bound*: 1093 lines.

3 Kannicht, Snell 1981, 414-15. In this paper, I will not differentiate between Kannicht's and Snell's work on the *tragica adespota*. Of the two, Bruno Snell was certainly in charge of editing the book-fragments and all conjectures and suggestions made without attribution in the app. crit. were entirely his. However, as they both clarified in the prologue to their edition, it was a joint venture and they both bore responsibility for the entire contents of the volume. Wecklein 1893, 651-62 printed 13 of Nauck's *fragmenta adespota* among Aeschylus's doubtful or spurious fragments (he explicitly rejected four of them). Smyth 1957, 505-18 unnecessarily increased the number to 21. Mette 1959, 269 printed six. Sommerstein 2008, 348-51 correctly brought the number down to just four.

paper, I will examine the nineteen that in my opinion are more likely to belong to Aeschylus.⁴ I will omit the two anonymous fragments published by Stefan Radt among Aeschylus's fragmenta dubia, trag. adesp. fr. 151a K.-Sn. = Aesch. fr. dub. 475 R. and trag. adesp. fr. 226a K.-Sn. = Aesch. fr. dub. 478 R. I think there is little to dispute on that head. I refer interested readers to his edition for further information.

2 The Fragments

Let us now turn to the analysis of the fragments.

2.1 trag. adesp. fr. 1a K.-Sn. (β 1222 L.-C.)

“βρυαζούσης λέαιν’ ὧς” ἐν Ἀθάμαντι. ἀκμαζούσης ἢ ἐγκύμονος

“Swollen, like a lioness”: in *Athamas*. At full strength, or pregnant.

Hsch. β 1222 L.-C. preserves a fragment from an anonymous play called *Athamas*, in which the appearance or behaviour of a female character is compared to that of a lioness. According to the lexicographer's contradictory interpretation, this woman is either pregnant or at the height of her physical strength.

Butler was the first to attribute the fragment to Aeschylus's *Athamas* (fr. 1-4a R.), noting that the style was typically Aeschylean (“Phrasis tamen est Aeschylea”).⁵ Welcker realised that a fragment from an Aeschylean tragedy, also quoted by Hesychius, mentioned the time or the season in which a lioness gives birth: Hsch. η 775 L.-C. καὶ παρ’ Αἰσχύλῳ (fr. 426 R.) ἡ λέαινα ἠριγένεια ἢ ἡ ἐν τῷ ἀέρι τίκτουσα, ἢ ἡ ἐν τῷ ἔαρι.⁶ Welcker believed that these two accounts of pregnant lionesses were connected to the deadly hallucination experienced by Athamas and recounted by *Ov. met.* 4.512-19: Athamas sees his wife, Ino, with their two children, Melicertes and Learchus. Driven mad by an Erinys (ll. 490-511), he mistakes his wife for a lioness and

⁴ Regarding papyri, the findings are very scant. Kannicht, Snell 1981, 214, 243 entertain the possibility (no more) that *P. Mil. Vogl.* 122 (trag. adesp. fr. 645) (“usus verborum Aeschilo [...] non indignus videtur”) and *P. Oxy.* 2881 (trag. adesp. fr. 659) (“6 et 16 Aeschylum redolent”) may preserve lines from plays by Aeschylus. Neither S. Radt nor A.H. Sommerstein mention them, and Lloyd-Jones 1957, 527 with fn. 1 was openly against the first instance (“I can see no positive reason whatsoever for ascribing this piece to Aeschylus [...] the language [...] suggests to me rather that of an Euripidean prologue”).

⁵ Butler 1816, 173.

⁶ Welcker 1824, 336 fn. 589.

his children for her cubs (ll. 512-14). Snatching Learchus from Ino's arms, he kills him cruelly (ll. 516-19). Interestingly, in Ovid's version, Athamas mistakenly identifies his son as a lion cub, whereas in other versions, the confusion is with a deer.⁷

Welcker proposed that these three accounts originated from Aeschylus's tragedy *Athamas*, two of whose six preserved fragments we owe to Hesychius (fr. 3, 4 R.): thus, in his reconstruction of the facts, Aesch. fr. 426 R. would provide evidence of the author's name, the anonymous fragment preserved in Hsch. β 1222 L.-C. would in turn provide evidence of the title, *Athamas*, and finally Ov. *met.* 4.512-19 would provide evidence of the plot: how Athamas murders his son, mistaking him for a lion cub. Nauck agreed that adesp. trag. fr. 1a K.-Sn. may belong to Aeschylus's tragedy. *LSJ* s.v. βρυσάζω even lists the example as "A. Fr. 491".⁸

Welcker's proposal is ingenious, tidy, and erudite, but it is based on very shaky foundations. Firstly, we do not know which of Aeschylus's plays fr. 426 R. comes from, nor do we have any compelling reason to believe that it is *Athamas*. Why, for example, could it not be the satyr play *The Lion* (fr. 123 R.), of which Welcker himself thought as well?⁹ Secondly, as Kannicht and Snell note, there are several other tragedies entitled *Athamas*: those by Sophocles (two tragedies, fr. 1-10 R.), Xenocles (33 F 1 Sn.-K.) and Atydamas II (60 F 1 Sn.-K.).¹⁰ Hesychius quoted several times from Sophocles's two *Athamas*: of the ten book-fragments that have come down to us, we owe six to his lexicon (fr. 1-3, 7, 9, 10 R.). Thirdly, we know almost nothing about the plot of Aeschylus's *Athamas* beyond the mention of the death of one of his sons in a cauldron, so any attempt at reconstruction would be highly speculative.¹¹ The only small clue in favour of Aeschylus's authorship is that, of all the tragedians, only Aeschylus uses the verb βρυσάζω ('swell, teem', *LSJ* s.v.), in *Suppl.* 878 περιχαμπτὰ βρυσάξεις, a very corrupt line. However, he only does this once and in a different sense: 'to wax wanton',¹² not 'to be pregnant' or 'to be at the height of one's powers'. Animal similes with ὡς following the noun to which it refers are frequent in all three tragedians.

It is certainly very likely that Ovid preserved an echo of the same *Athamas* from which Hesychius quoted:¹³ note the words Athamas

7 Lucas de Dios 2008, 155; Caballero González 2017, 152.

8 Nauck 1889², 3, 837.

9 Welcker 1824, 540 fn. 833.

10 Kannicht, Snell 1981, 3; Caballero González 2017, 33-4.

11 Radt 1985, 123; Caballero González 2017, 35.

12 Johansen, Whittle 1980, 3: 210 "'swell', i. e. perhaps 'wanton', 'revel'".

13 Ribbeck 1875, 34.

uses to point out to his comrades the presence of the supposed lioness, who is in fact his wife (*met.* 4.512-14):

*Protinus Aeolides media furibundus in aula
clamat "io, comites, his retia tendite silvis!
hic modo cum gemina visa est mihi prole leaena"*

At once the son of Aeolus, in a frenzy in the midst of the palace hall, cries out: "Hey! Companions, stretch your nets across these woods! Just now I saw a lioness right here with her two cubs!"

Given this fact, we must ask ourselves a question: what is more likely, that Ovid alludes to Aeschylus, that he alludes to Sophocles, or that he alludes to one of the lesser tragedians? The answer to that question could clear up many doubts. For now, we can only conclude that it may be a fragment from Aeschylus's *Athamas*, or it may be from Sophocles's, or someone else entirely. Kannicht and Snell suggested also Antiphanes's comedy *Athamas* (fr. 17 K.-A.), which is probably a mythological parody.¹⁴ Lexicographers have preserved its only surviving fragment. This suggestion merits attention. Metrically, trag. adesp. fr. 1a K.-Sn. is an incomplete iambic trimeter apparently lacking the penthemimeral or hephthemimeral caesuras.¹⁵ However, it does appear to feature the so-called medial caesura after the third *longum*, without an elided syllable falling before it. While this situation is not impossible for Aeschylus and Sophocles, it is much more common in comedy.¹⁶ We cannot be entirely certain about the genre to which the fragment belonged.

Be that as it may, when a medial caesura appears in a tragic trimeter, it tends to draw attention to an important word or the expression of a key idea;¹⁷ if Hesychius's lemma did indeed come from tragedy, the notion implied in βρῦαζούσης (a woman being pregnant, or being in full bloom) was probably fundamental in the play.

14 Kannicht, Snell 1981, 3.

15 Porson's law is observed.

16 West 1982, 88 "A significant proportion of (*scil.* comic iambic) lines (7.5% in Aristophanes, 15% in Menander) have neither penthemimeral nor hephthemimeral caesura, but either medial caesura or none at all". Regarding a medial caesura which does not fall after an elided syllable, Schein 1979, 21 fn. 11, 38 fn. 10 counts 15 examples for Aeschylus and another 15 for Sophocles. West 1982, 83 lists 20 cases for Aeschylus, 11 for Sophocles and 2 for Euripides (he explains away five of the seven cases usually ascribed to this poet). García González, Hernández Muñoz 2022, 72 fn. 3, quoting prior bibliography, mention 358 cases in Aristophanes and 183 in Menander.

17 Schein 1979, 21, 38.

2.2 **trag. adesp. fr. 7 K.-Sn. = Aesch. fr. 274 (?) Mette (Plut. Q.C. 691D + *De amore prolis* 496D)**

ὡσπερ ἡ τραγικὴ τροφὸς ἐκείνη τὰ τῆς Νιόβης τέκνα τιθνεῖται

λεπτοσπαθῆτων χλανιδίων ἐρειπίοις
θάλπουσα καὶ ψύχουσα <καὶ πόνῳ πόνον
ἐκ νυκτὸς ἀλλάσσοῦσα τὸν καθ' ἡμέραν>

3

As the nurse in the tragedy who cared for Niobe's children said:
"With shreds of well-made cloaks | keeping them warm and cool,
<moving | from the fatigue of the night to the fatigue of the day>".

The three-line fragment printed by Kannicht and Snell as their fr. 7 is, in fact, a reconstruction based on two different Plutarch passages. In Q.C. 691D, Plutarch quotes two iambic trimeters, the second only up to the hephthemimeral caesura. These are from a ῥῆσις pronounced by the nurse of Niobe's children as proof that the same clothes provide warmth in winter and coolness in summer. In *De amore prolis* 496D, he partially quotes the two lines already known: from the first, only the end of the line; from the second, the entire line. He adds a third line, which clearly follows the previous two. This time, it is used as proof of a mother's natural and instinctive love for her newborn child, despite the pains of childbirth. In this case, Plutarch does not identify the speaker and mistakenly applies the lines to the child's mother. Therefore, we can be sure that he did not know the context from which the passage originated.

Strictly speaking, Plutarch does not mention the title of the tragedy; he merely clarifies that it is the nurse who is speaking (ἡ τραγικὴ τροφὸς ἐκείνη). However, since the only tragedies in which we know for certain that Niobe or her children appear are titled *Niobe*, it is reasonable to suspect that it comes from a play with this title. Of the known Greek tragedians, only Aeschylus and Sophocles wrote tragedies about Niobe (Aesch. fr. 154a-67b; Soph. fr. 441a-51 R.).¹⁸ Therefore, the three lines must necessarily be from one or the other.¹⁹

Scholars who advocate for Sophocles point to the similarity between the polyptoton πόνῳ πόνον in l. 2 and Soph. *Ai.* 866 πόνος πόνῳ πόνον φέρει.²⁰ In contrast, Aeschylus's supporters highlight the

¹⁸ Radt 1999², 364. An otherwise unknown poet called Meliton also wrote a *Niobe* in the first century AD (182 Sn.-K.).

¹⁹ Barrett 1974, 173 fn. 6.

²⁰ The first was Valckenaer 1777, x-xi. This was followed by Dindorf (*ThGL*, col. 1519B s.v. χλανίδιον), who believed it to be a satyr play; Hermann 1828, 39; Welcker 1839, 291-2; Keuls 1978, 52. See the review of the literature in Ozbek 2023, 157.

use of the hapax λεπτοσπαθῆτων in l. 1.²¹ This adjective is a compound of λεπτός, of which there are two examples in Aeschylus (*Pers.* 114 λεπτοτόνοις, *Supp.* 3 λεπτοψαμάθων) and none in Sophocles.²² So far so good, but things become more complicated when Soph. fr. 877 R. is considered. This fragment contains the very similar expression ἀσπάθητον χλαῖναν, an unwoven cloak, which refers to a skin coat worn by people from the countryside.²³

At any rate stylistic arguments based on the use of λεπτοσπαθῆτων are not decisive either way, as adjectives composed of λεπτός are frequently used with nouns referring to items of clothing and are by no means exclusive to Aeschylus.²⁴ The closest parallel for λεπτοσπαθῆτων χλανιδίων does not come from Sophocles or Aeschylus, but from Eur. *Andr.* 831 λεπτόμιτον φάρος. Furthermore, iambic trimeters consisting of three words are common also in tragedies from the late fifth century BC, not only in Aeschylus,²⁵ and the rare diminutive χλανίδιον in l. 1 is only attested in Eur. *Supp.* 110, *Or.* 42 and Chaerem. 71 F 14, 9 Sn.-K. The metaphorical use of ἐρείπια for rags is peculiar and rare,²⁶ and is only paralleled in Eur. *Tr.* 1025 ἐν πέπλων ἐρείπιοις. Stylistically, then, nothing in the lines necessarily points to Aeschylus; it is tragic diction shared by several poets.²⁷

Rhythm does not take us very far either. There is a resolved third *longum* in l. 1, which forms a 'dactyl' in the third foot. This is the most frequent resolution in tragedy: it occurs in 46.98% of the resolutions in Aeschylus's trimeters and in 42.13% of Sophocles's.²⁸ The difference is not significant. The fourth paeon-shaped word χλανιδίων is placed in the second half of the line, with the initial syllables implementing the resolution, which is the norm for Aeschylus and Sophocles.²⁹

This is as far as style and rhythm will take us. What about the content? Similarly, there is insufficient evidence to determine whether the content of the three lines is more likely to be the work of Aeschylus or Sophocles. While it is logical to immediately think of

21 This idea was first championed by Lesky 1934, 7-8. This was followed, for example, by Mette 1959, 97; Lucas de Dios 2008, 474; Pennesi 2008, 129-30, fr. XVI. See the review of the literature in Ozbek 2023, 157.

22 Pennesi 2008, 130-1.

23 Pearson 1917, 3: 75. Blaydes 1894, 50 was the first to draw attention to the similarity of both expressions.

24 Stephanopoulos 1988, 208.

25 Sommerstein 2010, 71 fn.38.

26 Stieber 2011, 83 fn. 289.

27 e.g. Aesch. fr. inc. fab. 365 R. σὺ δὲ σπαθητοῖς τριμίτινοις ὑφάσμασιν, Eur. *Andr.* 831 λεπτόμιτον φάρος, Eur. *Tr.* 1025 ἐν πέπλων ἐρείπιοις. Cf. also Hermipp. fr. 5 K.-A. καιροσπάθητον ἀνθέων ὑφασμα καινὸν Ὠρών (perhaps from an unknown tragedy?).

28 Ceadel 1941, 85 (tab. 4c).

29 West 1982, 87.

the complaints of Orestes's Cilician nurse in Aesch. *Ch.* 749-62,³⁰ this is not conclusive. In Sophocles's satyr play *Trackers* (Ἰχνηυταί), the nymph Cyllene also mentions that she cares for the young Hermes night and day, acting as his nurse: Soph. fr. 314, 272, 275-6 R.] χερσὶ ταῖς ἑμαῖς ἐγὼ τρέφω· | ... | [πρὸς σπ]αργάνοις μένουσα λικνῖτιν τροφήν | [ἐξευθ]ετίζω νύκτα καὶ καθ' ἡμέραν ("With my own hands I nurse him; [...] Staying right by the swaddling-clothes, I ready his cradle-nourishment and tend to it night and day").

Some might argue that, in Aeschylus's *Niobe*, the nurse had a speaking part, whereas we know of no such character in Sophocles's play. Although it is sometimes taken as a given that Niobe's nurse spoke Aesch. fr. 154a R., the papyrus does not make it clear who the speaker is, except that he or she is close to Niobe. Other hypotheses, such as Niobe's or Amphion's mother, are equally plausible.³¹ Whatever the case, it must not be forgotten that the speaker of trag. adesp. fr. 7 K.-Sn. is the *children's* nurse, not Niobe's. Conversely, in Aeschylus's *Niobe*, the children are already dead and buried by the time the action begins (fr. 154a R., 6-7 R.). In contrast, in Sophocles's play, the children play an active role (cf. frr. 442, 445, 448 R.).³² This makes it reasonable to assume that their nurse would also play a significant part in the plot.

Therefore, we can conclude that the author of these three lines is either Aeschylus or Sophocles. At the current stage of the evidence, we cannot know which of them was.

2.3 trag. adesp. fr. *8ii K.-Sn. (Porph. *ad Gaurum* περὶ τοῦ πῶς ἐμψυχοῦται τὰ ἔμβρυα 11 § 1 p. 48 Kalbfleisch)

καθάπερ δ' ἐν τοῖς θεάτροις [ἑώρ]α[κ]α, οἱ τὸν Προμηθεά μιμούμενοι
κειμένου τοῦ πλάσματος τὴν ψυχὴν ποιεῖν ἀναγκάζονται [εἰ]ί[σ]
δύνειν εἰς τὸ σῶμα

And just as I have seen in the theatre, the actors who play
Prometheus, when what they have moulded lies inert, are forced
to make the soul enter the body

Porph. *ad Gaurum* 11 § 1 compares the entry of the soul into the body to a scene from a play he claims to have personally attended ([ἑώρ]α[κ]α), in which the creation of man from clay was dramatised, as was Prometheus's gift of life to inert matter. The fact that

30 Ozbek 2023, 157-8. First compared by Blomfield 1824, 168.

31 Radt 1985, 267

32 Ozbek 2023, 4.

Porphry mentions Prometheus should come as no surprise, as the Neoplatonists saw his theft of fire and gift to humanity as a metaphor for the soul's descent into the body.³³ However, that he should mention a play is surprising.

The idea that human beings were modelled by Prometheus from clay first appears in a comic fragment by Philemon, an older contemporary and rival of Menander (fr. 93,1-2 K.-A. τί ποτε Προμηθεύς, ὄν λέγουσ' ἡμᾶς πλάσαι | καὶ ἄλλα πάντα ζῶα). Although it may have been implicit in Aristoph. *Av.* 686, staged in 414 BC, it only became common from the fourth century BC onwards.³⁴ The most common version held that Prometheus modelled the body and Athena animated the clay,³⁵ but Porphyry's account differs: Prometheus is solely responsible for breathing life into the inert clay body by applying the fire he had stolen from Zeus.

Kannicht and Snell were inclined to believe that, if this account had anything to do with a play at all, it came from a satyr play.³⁶ As far as we know, Aeschylus was the only Greek tragedian to write plays with Prometheus as the protagonist.³⁷ A character in Sophocles's *Women from Colchis* tells the story of Prometheus in a digression (fr. 340 R.), but Porphyry's own description of what he saw rules out this possible source. It is tempting to think of Aeschylus's satyr play *Prometheus the Fire-Kindler* (fr. 204a-7a R) as a possible source, as Pandora was either mentioned or included in the action of the play: fr. **207a R. Προμηθεύς τὸν τῶν κακῶν πίθον παρὰ τῶν σατύρων λαβῶν καὶ παραθέμενος τῷ Ἐπιμηθεῖ παρήγγειλε μὴ δέξασθαι τι παρὰ Διός, ὁ δὲ παρακούσας ἐδέξατο τὴν Πανδώραν.³⁸ If Pandora was included, then perhaps her creation might have been, too.

Unfortunately, what we know of Aeschylus's *Prometheus the Fire-Kindler* does not allow this. Aesch. fr. **207 R. quoted *supra* implies that in this play it was Zeus, not Prometheus, who was responsible for creating Pandora (μὴ δέξασθαι τι παρὰ Διός). However, this is not the most important obstacle. The real issue is that the notion that Prometheus fashioned the entire human race from clay - not just Pandora, the first woman - did not emerge until the close of the fifth century BC, so it is improbable that Aeschylus was familiar with it in 472 BC. Even if we concede that he was and accept that *Prometheus the Fire-Kindler* also included the creation of mankind as well as Pandora, it is difficult to imagine how a play

33 Wilberding 2011, 68.

34 Headlam 1922, 79-80; Pfeiffer 1949, 1: 366; Kannicht, Snell 1981, 19.

35 Ruiz de Elvira 2001, 156.

36 Kannicht, Snell 1981, 19.

37 Radt 1985, 302.

38 Germar, Pechstein, Krumeich 1999, 172.

about the theft of fire and its delivery to the Satyrs could encompass such a vast time period as to include the creation and animation of human beings. These events were not alluded to in passing, described or predicted, but rather staged in the play as Porphyry describes.³⁹ None of Aeschylus's other tragedies featuring Prometheus allow for the creation of man as part of their plot.

If this Prometheus, creator of humanity, is not the work of Aeschylus, then whose could it be? Sophocles's satyr play *Pandora* (fr. 482-6 R.) reveals that the creation of the first woman from clay was a theme dealt with in this genre. However, we may be on the wrong track, as there is no indication in Porphyry's account that he is referring to a satyr play at all, beyond the fact that it resembles motifs we would expect to see in this type of play.⁴⁰ Cipolla suspected that the play Porphyry attended was not a satyr play or a tragedy, but a mime, as indicated by μιμούμενοι.⁴¹ As is well known, mime, and pantomime, dominated public taste above any other form of stage performance in the imperial age, and from other testimonies, we know that mime sometimes dealt with mythological and physical-philosophical episodes – not just comical or spicy episodes taken from everyday life.⁴²

Therefore, there are two possibilities: either we are dealing with a tragedy or satyr play about Prometheus, written by one of the so-called minor tragedians after the fifth century BC, which was still being performed in theatres in the third century AD but has left no other trace; or we are dealing with a contemporary mime with a mythological plot. In my opinion, the latter is much more plausible than the former, and the chances of our having a fragment of Aeschylus here are very slim.

2.4 trag. adesp. fr. 40a K.-Sn. (Aristid. Or. 3 § 479, p. 457 Lenz-Behr)

ἐν δὲ μέγιστον καὶ τελεώτατον καὶ πλείστης ἄξιον τιμῆς ἔξευρε τὰ τακτικά, ὑφ' ὧν ἅμα σώζεσθαι καὶ τῶν ἐναντίων κρείττοσιν εἶναι περιῆν αὐτοῖς. ὥς μὲν γὰρ ἡ τραγωδία φησὶν,

×—× οὐδὲ τῶν βροσκημάτων
οὐδὲν διέφερον

³⁹ Both arguments originate from Cipolla 2012-13, 103.

⁴⁰ Cipolla 2012-13, 103.

⁴¹ Cipolla 2012-13, 103.

⁴² On mimes with tragic and mythological themes, see Wiseman 2008, 148.

πρὶν ἐκείνῳ συγγενέσθαι. οἱ δὲ τοσοῦτον ἀπειχόν τοῦ σύμπαντας ἄν αὐτούς ἀριθμῆσαι, ἢ τὰς ναῦς ὀπόσαι τινὲς ἦσαν ἄς ἦγον, ὥστ' οὐδ' ὀπόσαι τινὲς αὐτοῖς εἰσὶν οἱ βασιλεῖς ὃ τε Ἀγαμέμνων καὶ ὁ Μενέλαος ἔμελλον εὐρήσειν, οὐδέ γε, ὡς ἔοικεν, ἐκείνοι τοὺς αὐτῶν πόδας ἢ καὶ (§ 480) τὰς χεῖρας ἑκάτερος, μὴ ὅτι τὴν στρατιάν. ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν Πλάτων (R. 522d) τε ἡμῖν προσπαίζει τοὺς τραγικούς καὶ ἡμεῖς συνεπαίξαμεν.

One of his inventions in particular was the most important and perfect and deserves the greatest consideration: strategy, thanks to which they managed to simultaneously stay alive and defeat their enemies. For, as the tragedy says, “They differed in no way from beasts” before they had dealings with him (*scil.* Palamedes).

And they were so far from being able to count their total number, or how many ships they had brought, that they had no way of discovering how many kings they had in Agamemnon and Menelaus, nor, it seems, could they (*scil.* know) how many feet and hands each one had, let alone the size of their army. This is how Plato made fun of the tragedians; I too join in the fun.

In his joint apology for the four orator-statesmen criticised in Plato's *Gorgias* (Or. 3 § 352-510), Aelius Arisitides uses the trial of Palamedes as an *exemplum*. Despite his verbal skills and the gratitude supposedly owed to him by the Greeks (§ 477-8), the hero was unjustly sentenced to death. To adorn his argument, Aristides partially quotes partially two iambic trimeters on the precarious situation of the Greeks before Palamedes put his inventiveness at their service (§ 479, p. 457 Lenz-Behr).

These lines therefore come from a tragedy about the trial of Palamedes. That much is clear. But this was not an unpopular subject. Aeschylus (frr. 181-2a R.), Sophocles (frr. 478-81 R.), Euripides (frr. 578-90 K.) and Astydamos II (60 F 5a Sn.-K.) all wrote tragedies entitled *Palamedes*, and we must also include Sophocles's *Nauplius* in the lot, either as one tragedy or two (frr. 425-38 R.). Of all these plays, only two explicitly highlight Palamedes's inventions as part of his defence: Aeschylus's *Palamedes* (frr. **181a, *182 R.), and Sophocles's *Nauplius* (fr. 432 R.).

The anonymous quotation from Aristides could be from either of them, but one reason favours Aeschylus. The argument supported by Aristides through his quotation of the anonymous lines is consistent with the content of Aesch. fr. **181a R. and fr. *182 R., from *Palamedes*. In fr. **181a R., Palamedes claims to have organised men who had

previously lived like beasts and taught them the value of number.⁴³ In fr. *182.1-2 R., the hero claims that he also taught them the art of strategy and how to organise the army.⁴⁴ Both subjects are touched upon on §§ 479-80 of Aristides's speech (ἐξεῦρε τὰ τακτικὰ ... αὐτοῦς ἀριθμῆσαι κτλ.).

Another argument in favour of Aeschylus's *Palamedes* is contextual. Immediately after quoting the two lines from the unknown tragedian, Aristides recalls Pl. R. 522d (§ 480). There, Plato jokingly alluded to Aesch. fr. **181a.*2 R.,⁴⁵ mocking the idea that Agamemnon did not know how to count or organise his army until Palamedes taught him:

Παγγέλοιοι γοῦν, ἔφην, στρατηγὸν Ἀγαμέμνονα ἐν ταῖς τραγωδίαις Παλαμήδης ἐκάστοτε ἀποφαίνει. ἢ οὐκ ἐννεόηκας ὅτι φησὶν ἀριθμὸν εὐρών τὰς τε τάξεις τῷ στρατοπέδῳ καταστήσαι ἐν Ἰλίῳ καὶ ἐξαριθμῆσαι ναῦς τε καὶ τᾶλλα πάντα (Aesch. fr. **181a.*2 R.), ὡς πρὸ τοῦ ἀναριθμητῶν ὄντων καὶ τοῦ Ἀγαμέμνονος, ὡς εἴοικεν, οὐδ' ὅσους πόδας εἶχεν εἰδότης, εἴπερ ἀριθμεῖν μὴ ἠπίστατο;

"It's utterly ridiculous," I said, "how in the tragedies Palamedes constantly portrays Agamemnon as a general. Or haven't you noticed that he says that by inventing number he established the battle formations for the army at Ilium and counted up the ships and everything else - as though before that everything was uncounted, and Agamemnon himself, it seems, didn't even know how many feet he had, if he didn't know how to count?"

From all of the above, one may be tempted to conclude that in §§ 479-80 Aristides refers to the same tragedy that Plato joked about, and that this tragedy was most likely Aeschylus's *Palamedes*.⁴⁶ However, while it is a logical conclusion, there are other possibilities. One such possibility can be inferred from the scholiast's comment on the passage (*ad* 260, 13, p. 702, 30 Dindorf). He pointed out that the tragic quotation included by Aristides came from Aeschylus's *Prometheus*, although he did not bother to tell us which one (τοῦτο ἐν Αἰσχύλῳ Προμηθεὺς λέγει περὶ τοῦ ἀνθρωπέιου γένους). This may be nothing more than a confusion on the part of the scholiast with Aesch. *Pr.* 452-3 κατώρυχες δ' ἔναιον ὥστ' ἀήσυροι | μύρμηκες

43 ΠΑΛ. ἔπειτα πάσης Ἑλλάδος καὶ ξυμμάχων | βίον διόκης' ὄντα πρὶν πεφυρμένον | θηρσὶν θ' ὄμοιον· πρῶτα μὲν τὸν πάνσοφον | ἀριθμὸν ἠῦρηκ' ἔξοχον σοφισμάτων.

44 ΠΑΛ. καὶ ταξιάρχας †καὶ στρατάρχας καὶ ἑκατοντάρχας† | ἔταξα.

45 Mette 1959, 109 (Pl. R. 522d is his *Palamedes* fr. 303c); Radt 1985, 296.

46 Dindorf 1829, 340; Hermann 1852a, 360; Behr, Lenz 1980, 457.

ἄντρων ἐν μυχοῖς ἀνηλίοις,⁴⁷ two lines that compare human life to that of ants before the Titan's benevolent intervention.⁴⁸ However, he might be referring to one of the other plays about Prometheus. Why? Because we know that, in at least one of these, Prometheus listed the inventions he benefited humanity with: Aesch. fr. *189a R. ἵππων ὄνων τ' ὄξεια καὶ ταύρων γένος | δούς ἀντίδουλα καὶ πόνων ἐκδέκτορα. Unfortunately, Plutarch (*De fort.* 98C, *De soll. anim.* 964F), our source for this fragment, did not see fit to clarify the title of the Prometheus play from which the lines came.

Therefore, the content points to a tragedy by Aeschylus: either *Palamedes* or one of the Prometheus plays. But there is a serious metrical issue: there is a tribrach in the second foot of the second iambic trimeter quoted by Aristides, that is, a resolved second *longum*. This is extremely unusual for Aeschylus;⁴⁹ once proper names are excluded, the tribrach appears in this position ten times in all of Aeschylus's trimeters (3.56% of resolved feet), compared to forty-five times in Sophocles (9.98% of resolved feet), five hundred and forty-nine times in Euripides (15.25% of resolved feet), and sixteen times (25% of resolved feet) in post-classical tragedians.⁵⁰ To further compound matters, if the second anceps (-ρον) were short, then διέφερον would be a proceleusmatic-shaped word. If the anceps were long, as we would expect if Zieliński's *lex de secundo pede* were observed, we would have a fourth paeon-shaped word ending just before the caesura. Proceleusmatic-shaped words are strongly avoided in resolution in all styles of the tragic trimeter except for Euripides's latest tragedies. Precaesural fourth paeon-shaped words were simply not permitted by Aeschylus.⁵¹

Therefore, both content and context point to Aeschylus, but rhythm makes Aeschylean authorship almost impossible. Out of desperation, we could maybe speculate that Aristides built upon Plato's reference by quoting lines from another playwright about the primitive state

47 Dindorf 1829, 340; Nauck 1889², 932. Sch. P in Aesch. *Pr.* 459b (Aesch. fr. *182a III R.) claims that Aeschylus attributed the invention of number both to Prometheus and to Palamedes; clearly, the scholiast means that this occurred in different plays.

48 Dindorf 1829, 340; Nauck 1889², 932.

49 Yorke 1936, 118 "Tribrachs in the second foot are surprisingly rare (*scil.* in Aeschylus)"; Devine, Stephens 1980, 71 "Aeschylus [...] admits practically no resolution in this location".

50 The figures are those of Ceadel 1941, 84, 88, with tabs. 4A, 4B, 4C, 5, 6. These are based on data that are now outdated or incomplete, but the trend is still very clear.

51 Devine, Stephens 1994, 108, 110, West 1982, 87-8. Devine and Stephens calculated the percentage of all fourth paeon-shaped words that are precaesural, and found that for Aeschylus it is 0.00% and for Euripides's *liberrimus* style 20.83% (tab. 3.5). As for the rate of occurrence per thousand trimeters of proceleusmatic-shaped words in resolution, they calculate 0.23% for Aeschylus vs. 9.07% for Euripides's *liberrimus* style (tab. 3.4).

of humanity and how a god lifted humankind from their animalistic condition.⁵² Compare, for instance, the similar notion in Eur. *Supp.* 201-2 αἰῶ δ' ὅς ἡμῖν βίῳτον ἐκ πεφυρμένου | καὶ θηριώδους θεῶν δισταθμήσατο. But this is just a longshot.

2.5 trag. adesp. fr. 110 K.-Sn. (Clem. Al. *Strom.* 2.15.63.4)

ἀλλ' οὐδὲ Αἴας σιωπᾶ, μέλλων δὲ ἑαυτὸν ἀποσφάττειν κέκραγεν·

οὐκ ἦν ἄρ' οὐδὲν πῆμ' ἔλευθέρου δάκνον
 ψυχὴν ὁμοίως ἀνδρὸς ὡς ἀτιμία.
 οὕτως πέπονθα καί με συμφορᾶς αἰεὶ (Süvern: συμφοροῦσα codd.)
 βαθεῖα κηλὶς ἐκ βυθῶν ἀναστρέφει
 λύσσης πικροῖς κέντροισιν ἠρεθισμένον 5

But Ajax does not remain silent either, and as he was about to kill himself, he cried out: “For there is no calamity that bites as deeply | into the spirit of a free man as dishonour. | This is what has happened to me, and the deep stain | of misfortune always disturbs me from the depths, | spurred on by the bitter sting of raging madness”.

During a discussion about the differences between sin, crime, and error, Clement of Alexandria (*Strom.* 2.15.62-4) provides three examples of tragic characters who recognise the limitations of reason and good judgement when confronted with the power of their passion (θυμός). These are Laius in Euripides’s *Chrysippus* (fr. 840 K.), Euripides’s *Medea* (*Med.* 1078-9), and Ajax in an unknown tragedy. From the latter, Clement quotes five splendid iambic trimeters.⁵³ There are no resolved feet in them.

Clearly, these lines come from a play about Ajax’s madness and suicide. They convey the hero’s lament when he regains his sanity and realises the extent of his dishonour. They are spoken just before he takes his own life. They also enable us to draw conclusions about the structure and dramaturgy of this tragedy, particularly when compared to Ajax’s final speech in the corresponding farewell scene in Sophocles’s *Ajax* (ll. 815-65). The particle ἄρ’ in l.1 indicates that Ajax has just realised at that very moment the dishonour into which

⁵² Haas 1884, 87-8 suspected that Aelius Aristides had identified the source to which Pl. *R.* 522d alluded, namely *Palamedes* by Aeschylus, consulted the drama, and added other lines from it on his own initiative. In a very confusing note, Hermann 1852b, 93-4 seems to attribute the fragment quoted by Aristides to Euripides’s *Palamedes*.

⁵³ Finglass 2020, 168.

he has fallen.⁵⁴ The anonymous Ajax emphasises that he belongs to a larger group, that of the free men, whereas Sophocles's Ajax is acutely aware of his unique and isolated individuality. Another difference is that the anonymous Ajax dwells on his bout of madness and harps on about his dishonour. Sophocles's character, however, does not descend into self-pity; he remains silent about his ἀτιμία in his farewell speech, focusing his anger and his hatred on his terrible curse.⁵⁵

Apart from Sophocles, several other tragedians wrote tragedies about Ajax.⁵⁶ Aeschylus wrote a trilogy, the second play of which, *Thracian Women* (fr. 83-5 R.), largely overlapped with the plot of Sophocles's *Ajax*, namely the hero's madness, return to sanity and subsequent suicide. Carcinus the Younger's *Ajax* emphasised the hero's mad laughter (70 F 1a Sn.-K.), and a play by Theodectes of the same name included a debate between Odysseus and Ajax over Achilles's weapons (72 F 1 Sn.-K.). Astydamos II, a descendant of Aeschylus, wrote a tragedy called *The Madness of Ajax* (60 F 1a Sn.-K.). *P. Berol.* 6870 (trag. adesp. fr. 683 K.-Sn.) should also be added, a fragment from an anonymous classical or early Hellenistic play in which a female chorus mourns the death of Ajax. Which is it, then?

Both Welcker and van Leeuwen attributed the fragment to Theodectes's *Ajax*.⁵⁷ However, this play focused on the rhetorical ἀγών between Odysseus and Ajax, that is to say, the judgement of the arms rather than Ajax's suicide.⁵⁸ It should therefore be ruled out. This leaves us with Aeschylus's *Thracian Women*, Carcinus's *Ajax*, and Astydamos's *The Madness of Ajax*.

The fragment's style is not distinctive enough to allow us to identify its author. There are parallels from all three tragedians.⁵⁹ In fact, there are even some unexpected echoes of Euripidean diction. Apart from Eur. *Heracle.* 482-3 and Eur. *HF* 1288 (see footnote 59), there are other, more subtle echoes that may be unconscious and are therefore more interesting. Besides this anonymous fragment, the form πέπονθα appears in tragedy twelve other times. Euripides

54 Finglass 2020, 171.

55 Finglass 2011, 376; Finglass 2020, 171.

56 Jebb 1896, xlvii.

57 Welcker 1841, 1073, van Leeuwen 1881, 60.

58 Jebb 1896, xlvii.

59 ll. 1-2 ἄρ' οὐδὲν πῆμ' ἐλευθέρου δάκνον | ψυχὴν ὁμοίως ἀνδρὸς ὡς ἀτιμία ~ Aesch. *Pers.* 846-7 μάλιστα δ' ἦδε συμφορὰ δάκνει, | ἀτιμίαν κτλ., Eur. *Heracle.* 482-3 μὴ 'πὶ τοῖς πάλαι κακοῖς | προσκειμένον τι πῆμα σὴν δάκνει φρένα. ll. 3-4 οὕτως πέπονθα καὶ με συμφορᾶς ἀεὶ (Süvern: συμφοροῦσα codd.) | βαθεῖα κηλὶς ~ Soph. *OT* 833 κηλὶδ' ἔμαυτῶ συμφορᾶς ἀφιγμένην. l. 5 λύσσης πικροῖς κέντροισιν ~ Eur. *HF* 1288 γλώσσης πικροῖς κέντροισι.

is the only playwright to use it in the same metrical position as we find it in l. 3: filling the part of the line that lies between the third element and the penthemimeral caesura (*Alc.* 816, *IA* 501, 847), although Sophocles does have ὄς μὴ πέπονθε at the beginning of the line (fr. 900 R.). Furthermore, Euripides is the only tragedian to use the third-person singular ἀναστρέφει that we find in l. 4 (*Supp.* 331, *Rh.* 332). Euripides favoured the verb ἀναστρέφω: he used it ten times,⁶⁰ compared to once in Aeschylus (*Pers.* 333) and three times in Sophocles (fr. *269c, 23 R., fr. 1012 R., *Ph.* 449). These may seem like insignificant coincidences in isolation, but together they may not be.

Nevertheless, Euripides must be ruled out because none of his tragedies featured Ajax as the protagonist. The content – the words spoken by Ajax just before he commits suicide – certainly makes attributing the fragment to Aeschylus's *Thracian Women* reasonable.⁶¹ After all, *Thracian Women* and *Ajax* dramatise exactly the same episode, albeit with major differences in conception. The main difference is that Ajax's death in *Thracian Women* was the subject of a messenger speech; it was not shown on stage (sch. *Soph. Ai.* 815).⁶² This seems to me incompatible with Clement's assertion that Ajax cried out these words 'just as he was about to kill himself' (μέλλων δὲ ἑαυτὸν ἀποσφάττειν κέκραγεν); attempting to address this objection by suggesting that the messenger reported Ajax's last words or that Ajax said them before leaving the stage seems to me to be special pleading.⁶³

Conversely, the only surviving fragment of Carcinus's *Ajax* also focuses on the award of the arms and the debate between Odysseus and Ajax (70 F 1a Sn.-K.).⁶⁴ At one point in Odysseus's argument, when he said that one should do what is just, the actor playing Ajax burst out laughing at just the right moment (εὐκαίρως). Ajax's mad laughter was certainly proverbial (*DGE* s.v. Αἰάντειος 1). However, the report does not suggest that the roar of laughter was a symptom of Ajax's madness in this play, as it was in *Soph. Ai.* 303, but rather a bitterly sarcastic response to his adversary's piece of sophistry (μετὰ εἰρωνείας ὁ Αἴας γέλωτι ἐχρήσατο). Therefore, we cannot be sure whether Ajax's madness was part of the plot of Carcinus's tragedy

60 *Hipp.* 982, 1176, 1228, *Andr.* 1221, *Supp.* 331, *Tr.* 993, *Hel.* 1557, *Ba.* 793, *Rh.* 332, fr. 490, 1 K.

61 This was the opinion of such heavyweights as Süvern 1826, 28 fn. 2, Mette 1963, 124-5 and Lesky 1983, 123.

62 Finglass 2011, 39.

63 Mette 1963, 125 believed that Ajax spoke the lines before he left the stage intending to kill himself out of sight of the audience.

64 Zen. *Ath.* 1.60 λέγουσι δὲ ὅτι Πλεισθένης ὁ ὑποκριτὴς τὸν Καρκίνου Αἴαντα ὑποκρινόμενος εὐκαίρως ἐγέλασε· τοῦ γὰρ Ὀδυσσεῶς εἰπόντος ὅτι τὰ δίκαια χρῆ ποιεῖν μετὰ εἰρωνείας ὁ Αἴας γέλωτι ἐχρήσατο.

or not. The title of Astydamos's *The Madness of Ajax* (60 F 1a Sn.-K.) reveals that the madness of the hero was indeed the subject, but not a single fragment of it has survived.

Stylistically, it is unclear whether the lines fit with Aeschylus's poetry better than anybody else's. Based on the current evidence, it is impossible to date the fragment or identify its author. Nevertheless, I tend to agree with those who believe it is post-classical.⁶⁵ There are no resolutions in any of the five lines. On average, Aeschylus implements one resolution every 15 lines, while tragedians of the late fourth century avoided them completely.⁶⁶ The first four out of five lines feature the penthemimeral caesura (see *infra* 2.12).

2.6 trag. adesp. fr. 145 K.-Sn. (Athen. 6.223A = Diphilus fr. 29, 1-3 K.-A.)

“ὦ τόνδ’ ἐποπτεύουσα καὶ κεκτημένη
 Βραυρωνος ἱεροῦ θεοφιλέστατον τόπον,
 Λητοῦς Διός τε τοξόδαμνε παρθένε,” 3
 ὡς οἱ τραγῳδοὶ φασιν.

“You who oversee and possess | this land of holy Brauron, most beloved by the gods, | virgin archer, daughter of Leto and Zeus”, as the tragedians say.

Athen. 6.223A quotes five lines from the comedy *Ἐλαιωνηφρουροῦντες* (*The Guardians of the Olive Grove*) by Diphilus (fr. 29 K.-A.), in which he complains that tragedy is much easier to write than comedy. The audience's familiarity with the plot of a tragedy gives the tragedian much more licence, whereas the opposite is true for comedy, forcing the playwright to sharpen his wit and creativity. W. Dindorf (*ThGL*, col. 397A s.v. Βραυρών) noted the use of τραγῳδοί in l. 4 and postulated that the preceding three lines came from an unknown tragedian quoted by the comic poet.

Nauck argued that the tragic fragment only included the first two lines, with the third line being an adaptation of Eur. *Hipp.* 1451.⁶⁷ Kannicht and Snell rightly disagreed.⁶⁸ Upon her return from the land of the Taurians, Iphigenia became the warder of Artemis's temple in Brauron (Eur. *IT* 1462-7). The comparison with Eur. *IT* 1462-3 σε δ’

⁶⁵ Finglass 2011, 36: “They (*scil.* trag. adesp. fr. 110 and 683 K.-Sn.) may well come from after the fifth century”.

⁶⁶ Ceadel 1941, 84, 88.

⁶⁷ Nauck 1889², 870.

⁶⁸ Kannicht, Snell 1981, 56.

ἀμφὶ σεμνάς, Ἰφιγένεια, λείμακας | Βραυρωνίας δεῖ τῆδε κληδουχεῖν
θεῶν led Kannicht and Snell to suspect that the three lines, addressed to Artemis as the tutelary goddess of Brauron, might come from a tragedy about Iphigenia, perhaps from the beginning of the prologue. However, they could not determine whether the plot would resemble *Iphigenia in Aulis* (the sacrifice of Iphigenia to appease the wrath of Artemis in Aulis) or *Iphigenia Among the Taurians* (the recognition of Orestes and the escape from the land of the Taurians).

There can be no doubt that the tragedy from which the three lines came involved Iphigenia: no other plot would lead to the mention of Brauron and the invocation of Artemis. However, what distinguishes this lost version is that the play was set in Brauron rather than Aulis, as indicated by the deictic τὸνδ' in l. 1.⁶⁹

Radt included this fragment in the group of those thought by some to belong to Aeschylus's *Iphigenia*, but he didn't mention who supported this idea. It's easy to see why Aeschylus would be a good fit.⁷⁰ Apart from Euripides, only Aeschylus (fr. 94 R.), Sophocles (fr. 305-12 R.) and Polyidus (78 F 1 Sn.-K.) wrote works of fiction called *Iphigenia* that can be dated before Diphilus, who was a contemporary of Menander. We only have a fragment of Aeschylus's play, which does not help, but we know that Sophocles dramatised the sacrifice of the young woman in Aulis.⁷¹ Therefore, the latter play can be ruled out, since the present fragment locates the action in Brauron, not Aulis. That leaves us with Aeschylus and Polyidus.

There are indeed some indications of Aeschylean style, such as the use of the verb ἐποπτεύω (l. 1) in reference to the activities of a divinity. This is a *Lieblingswort* of Aeschylus's, appearing nine times in his plays out of eleven occurrences in tragedy.⁷² Nevertheless, there are also stronger echoes of Euripidean style: (1) the vocative ὦ [...] κεκτημένη in l. 1 (cf. Eur. *Or.* 1204 ὦ τὰς φρένας μὲν ἄρσενας κεκτημένη, exactly in the same metrical position); (2) the rare epithet τοξόδαμνος in l. 3 to describe Artemis (cf. *Hipp.* 1451 τὴν τοξόδαμνον Ἄρτεμιν μαρτύρομαι);⁷³ (3) the phrase Λητοῦς Διὸς τε [...] παρθένε in l. 3 (cf. *IT* 1230 ὦ Διὸς Λητοῦς τ' ἄνασσα παρθένε); (4) the resolved second *longum* in l. 2, which is exceedingly rare in Aeschylus but

69 On the use of deictic pronouns in Euripides's prologues to indicate the setting of the play see Collard 1975, 105.

70 Radt 1985, 213.

71 Radt 1999², 270-1.

72 *Ag.* 1270, 1579, *Ch.* 1, 489, 583, 985, 1063, *Eu.* 220, 224. All of them refer to the vigilance of a god or a spirit.

73 Aside from Diphil. fr. 29, 3 K.-A., τοξόδαμνος is attested only in Aesch. *Pers.* 85 (Ares), Eur. *Hipp.* 1451 (Artemis), and Lyc. 1331 (Artemis).

occurs five times more frequently in Euripides;⁷⁴ (5) if these lines belong to the prologue, the invocation of the land's tutelary goddess is very similar to that in Eur. *Supp.* 1-2 Δήμητερ ἔστιοῦχ' Ἐλευσῖνος χθονός | τῆσδ'(ε).⁷⁵ Line 2 has an anapestic-shaped word (ἱεροῦ) before the caesura, first introduced in that position by Euripides.⁷⁶ Finally, the two resolutions in l. 2 also appear to suggest a later date.⁷⁷

We've reached an impasse. Style and content point to Euripides, but also to Aeschylus. Rhythm points completely away from Aeschylus. Diphilus only quoted two other tragedians in the rest of his fragments: Euripides twice and Aeschylus once. On the other hand, we don't have enough of Diphilus's lines to know if we can draw any conclusions from his silence.

Given the rhythm, I would hazard a guess that the lines originate from a post-Euripidean tragedy influenced by *Iphigenia Among the Taurians* and set in Brauron.⁷⁸ The fact that such a play is not inconceivable is demonstrated by Hyg. *fab.* 121, which preserves the plot of an anonymous, post-classical sequel to *Iphigenia Among the Taurians* called *Chryses*, set in Sminthe (trag. adesp. fr. 10c K.-Sn.). Interestingly, sch. Aristoph. *Lys.* 645 records a version in which the sacrifice of Iphigenia takes place in Brauron, rather than in Aulis. Although this detail coincides with the setting of our tragic fragment, it does not allow us to make any further assumptions, since the scholium quotes only the Hellenistic poet Euphorion as its authority (fr. 91 Powell).

It is best not to speculate about the authorship of this fragment. We should look for a tragedy set in Brauron featuring a chorus of its citizens and focusing on Iphigenia. Beyond that, we cannot go.

74 See *supra* 2.4 and Devine, Stephens 1980, 71, tab. 2.

75 Kassel, Austin 1986, 65.

76 Dale 1967, xxvi.

77 Yorke 1936, 118 "Two resolutions occur in the same line in Aeschylus seven times (nine times if account is taken of proper names)".

78 Polyidus's *Iphigenia* is an appealing proposition: it revolved around the recognition of Orestes by Iphigenia just before she is about to sacrifice him (78 F 1 Sn.-K.). The work was well enough known for Aristotle to mention it twice, placing it on a par with Euripides's *Iphigenia Among the Taurians* (*Po.* 1455a4, 1455b8). However, Aristotle's account does not allow us to state with complete certainty that it was a tragedy and not a dithyramb or a rhetorical or critical work in prose (Snell, Kannicht 1986², 248). Arist. *Po.* 1455a4 refers to Polyidus as a sophist, and Snell, Kannicht 1986², 248 identify him as the dithyrambic poet Polyidus of Selymbria, who won a dithyramb contest between 398 and 380 BC (78 T 1 Sn.-K.).

2.7 trag. adesp. fr. 147 K.-Sn. (*Et. Gen. B α 384* Lasserre-Livadaras)

×—×—×— ἀκταῖνον μένος

... strength that keeps someone on his feet

The Byzantine lexicon *Et. Gen. B α 384* Lasserre-Livadaras clarifies the meaning of the verb ἀκταίνειν ('lift up, raise') and illustrates it with a poetic quotation. Based on its vocabulary and metre - half of an iambic trimeter starting from the hephthemimeral caesura - the quotation is likely to be from a tragedy.

The verb ἀκταίνω is extremely rare (*DGE* s.v. ἀκταίνω). Before the first century BC, ἀκταίνω is attested with certainty only once: in Aesch. *Eu.* 36 ὡς μήτε σωκεῖν μήτε μ' ἀκταίνειν στάσιν.⁷⁹ Phryn. *PS* p. 39 von Borries s.v. ἀκταινώσαι (from ἀκταινώω) provides a definition that is remarkably similar to that found in Byzantine lexicons. To illustrate the meaning and accentuation of the verb, Phrynichus uses a phrase from Aeschylus, οὐκ ἔτ' ἀκταίνω, which may be either a poorly remembered quotation of *Eu.* 36 μήτε μ' ἀκταίνειν or a different fragment by Aeschylus (Aesch. fr. dub. 454 R.). Based on this, Schütz concluded that ἀκταῖνον μένος from *Et. Gen. B* must also be a quotation from Aeschylus, recommending its publication among this author's fragments.⁸⁰ This is a plausible deduction and the figurative use of ἀκταῖνον μένος is quite Aeschylean, but it is far from certain.

2.8 trag. adesp. fr. 162 K.-Sn. = Aesch. fr. 196 (?) Mette (Eust. *Od.* 1484, 49)

Κίλιξ δὲ χώρα καὶ Σύρων ἐπιστροφαί

But the Cilician country and the places frequented by the Syrians

Eust. *Od.* 1484, 49 discusses the formation of the feminine of Αἰθίοψ and observes that ancient poets used the masculine form for the feminine. He demonstrates this by citing two passages by Aeschylus concerning the Ethiopian language (fr. 328 R.) and an Ethiopian woman (fr. 329 R.). As a parallel example of this lack of distinction, Eustathius cites another iambic trimeter in which Κίλιξ (masc.) is made to agree with χώρα (fem.). This line was evidently well known in antiquity, as Aelius Aristides alludes to it without expressly citing

⁷⁹ Pind. fr. 52m, 21 Sn.-M. has ...].αραντοταρακταίνοντογ[.].]

⁸⁰ Schütz 1821, 267.

the author (*Or.* 27.15 οὔτε Κύρων καὶ Κιλίκων, ποιητῆς ἂν εἴποι τις, ἐνστροφάι), evidently on the assumption that his readers would have no difficulty in identifying it.⁸¹

Taking all this into account, Bergk drew a comparison between the occurrence of ἐπιστροφάι here and fr. 271 R. from Aeschylus's *Phrygians* or *The Ransoming of Hector*, preserved in Hsch. ε 5264 L.-C. (ἐπιστροφάι· διατριβαί, δίαται. Αἰσχύλος Φρυξίν). He concluded that both Eustathius's line and Hesychius's lemma referred to the same passage, proposing to attribute it to Aeschylus's *Phrygians* as well.⁸²

This is, once again, plausible, but far from certain. Several clues point towards Aeschylus: Eustathius does quote this line alongside two other Aeschylean fragments (frr. 328 and 329 R.).⁸³ Aeschylus uses ἐπιστροφάι in the plural three more times (fr. 271 R., fr. 249 R., *Th.* 648) to mean 'moving up and down in a place' (*LSJ* s.v. ἐπιστροφή II 4).⁸⁴ In fact, the syntax of Aesch. fr. 249 R. Σπερχειῖ ποταμῆ βούνομοί τ' ἐπιστροφάι is pretty similar to that of Κίλιξ δὲ χώρα καὶ Σύρων ἐπιστροφάι. However, Aeschylus isn't the only playwright to use ἐπιστροφάι in the plural, in conjunction with an ethnonym, and in the same metrical position. This is proven by Eur. *Hel.* 440 Ἐλλην πεφυκῶς, οἷσιν οὐκ ἐπιστροφάι, although the sense is slightly different ('men who have no business here'). Nauck rightly continued to print the fragment among the *adespota*, despite welcoming Bergk's identification.⁸⁵

81 Bergk 1848, 147-8. Curiously enough, Eustathius's manuscripts erroneously read *Κηρῶν* ('Chinese') instead of *Σύρων*. The correction was first made by Burges 1821, 103.

82 Bergk 1848, 147.

83 This may be the reason why Mette 1959, 66 printed it among the fragments of Aeschylus's *Memnon*.

84 Dindorf 1851², 304 "Hoc nomine saepius usus est Aeschylus".

85 Nauck 1889², 873. In fact, Bergk credited August Meineke with the identification, but he didn't mention the publication in which this was done. I have been unable to track down the reference. Nauck 1889², 86 proposed combining this line with another anonymous fragment on a similar geographical theme (trag. adesp. fr. 560 K.-Sn. χωρὶς τὰ Μυσῶν καὶ Φρυγῶν ὀρίσματα), which Burges 1845, 26 and Hermann 1841², 176 had already identified as Aeschylean (= Aesch. fr. 406? Mette), and to consider both part of Aeschylus's *Phrygians* fr. 271 R. But in the case of trag. adesp. fr. 560 K.-Sn. the speaker is Telephus (Sch. Gr. Naz. *de se ipso* 662-3 fol. 82, p. 37 ll. 6-9 Gaisford), which was not a character in Aeschylus's *Phrygians*. Therefore, they cannot belong to the same play.

2.9 **trag. adesp. fr. 208 K.-Sn. = Aesch. fr. dub. 468 Wecklein, 489a Sommerstein (Hsch. ε 2425 L.-C.)**

“x—x—x ἐμπεδῆς <δὲ> γαμόρος | <ἔ>μαρψεν Ἄιδης”. ἔμπεδον ἔλεγεν τὸν Ἄιδην, ὡς Ἴππωνάξ (fr. 146a W.) ἀντὶ (Bergk: ἀντίον cod.) τοῦ τοῦνεμπεδέου ἰχθόνιος. Οἱ δὲ οὕτως· ὁ Ἄιδης ἐπιμελής ἐστι γάμορος καὶ ἀσφαλής, οὐκ ἀμελῶν οὐδενός, ἀλλ’ ἴεις τὴν γῆν λαμβάνων† τὴν μερίδα, οἷον τὴν γῆν μεριζόμενος.

“The steadfast landowner | laid hold of him, Hades”: he called Hades ‘steadfast’, like Hipponax (fr. 146a W.), instead of ‘[...] from the underground’. But others interpret it this way: Hades is an attentive and steadfast landowner who neglects no one, but rather †takes in respect of the land† his share, insofar as the earth falls to him in the distribution.

Hsch. ε 2425 L.-C. quotes a poetic fragment as his lemma that was printed by Kannicht and Snell as two partial iambic trimeters.⁸⁶ They accepted in his text the supplements proposed by West.⁸⁷ In this they disagreed with Nauck and Wecklein, who had both printed the text exactly as it was written in the manuscript, ἐμπεδῆς γαμόρος μάρψεν Ἄιδης, i.e. as a lyric fragment in cretic rhythm. Kannicht’s and Snell’s solution of scanning the text as two partial iambic trimeters is undoubtedly correct.⁸⁸ The vocalism in ἐμπεδῆς and Ἄιδης and the unaugmented aorist μάρψεν, which is not attested in the lyrical part of tragedy,⁸⁹ indicate that the line did not originate from a melic part. In iambic trimeters, dactyl-shaped words were restricted to the end of the line, and that is where we find γαμόρος.⁹⁰ Therefore, West’s palmary supplements solve these two problems at much less cost than the serious textual surgery required to regularise the cretic rhythm and the vocalism.

⁸⁶ Kannicht, Snell 1981, 73.

⁸⁷ West 1989², 1: 162 (*ad Hipp. fr. 146a W.*). Blaydes 1894, 394 had already proposed ἐμπεδός σφε γαμόρος | ἔμαρψεν Ἄιδης.

⁸⁸ This is despite the recent defence of Hesychius’s text by Tsantsanoglou 2013, 58. Burges 1821, 193, the first to recognise that this was a fragment of a tragedy, also scanned it as two partial iambic trimeters; he proposed ἐμπεδῆς σε γάμορος (sic) | μάρψειεν Ἄιδης.

⁸⁹ Compare Eur. *Ba.* 1173 ἔμαρψα τόνδ’ ἄνευ βρόχων (lyr), *Rh.* 681 τοῦσδ’ ἔχω, τοῦσδ’ ἔμαρψα (lyr), Soph. *OC* 1681 ἄσκοποι δὲ πλάκες ἔμαρψαν (lyr). Verbs without augment are more characteristic of Messenger-speeches (Schein 1979, 24). Unaugmented forms of μάρπτω are not attested in tragedy. The augmented ἔμαρψεν is attested in Soph. *Ai.* 444, Eur. fr. 779, 5 K. (trim.).

⁹⁰ West 1982, 87.

On the basis of its diction, wordplay, vivid metaphor and densely allusive meaning, it has been plausibly attributed to Aeschylus.⁹¹ The crucial element that makes attribution to Aeschylus very probable is the use of the Dorian form γαμόρος instead of the Attic γεωμόρος in the fragment. In fact, this Dorian form is only attested three times in literary texts from the Classical and Hellenistic periods: once in Hdt. 7.155 and twice in Aeschylus (*Eu.* 890, *Supp.* 613).⁹² *Eu.* 890 ἔξεστι γάρ σοι τῆσδε γαμόρω χθονός refers to deities who have been allotted a home or a dominion under the earth,⁹³ which is a close parallel in sense.

The expression ἐμπεδῆς γαμόρος, which Latte translated as ‘assiduus colonus’,⁹⁴ bristles with double meanings and wordplay, almost as if it were a riddle, in the typical Aeschylean fashion.⁹⁵ Let’s attempt to parse it.

γεωμόρος usually means ‘one who has a share of land, a landowner’ (*LSJ* s.v. I 1); the Doric form γαμόρος primarily refers to a dominant socio-political class in Syracuse.⁹⁶ In tragedy, however, the term does not have this narrow meaning. Instead, it is redefined based on its components, γᾶ- and -μορος, ‘I have a share of’. ‘He who has a share of the land’ is he who has rights over it, that is, a citizen.⁹⁷ The anonymous tragedian engages in his own re-etymologising, deriving γαμόρος from γῆ + μείρομαι to mean ‘he who has received the earth as his portion’, with the collateral notion that it was his due (*LSJ* s.v. μείρομαι (A) I). It refers to Hades in the sense that, when the universe was divided among the sons of Cronus, he was given the underworld in the distribution of spheres of power (*Il.* 15.189-91 ἕκαστος δ’ ἔμμορε τιμῆς | ... | ... Ἀΐδης δ’ ἔλαχε ζῶφον ἠερῶντα).⁹⁸ *DGE* s.v. γεωμόρος A I 1 correctly translates ‘el que tiene su parte de la tierra’.

91 This was first noted by Burges 1821, 193 and accepted by Wecklein 1893, 656, who printed it as Aesch. fr. dub. 468. This attribution is also accepted by Bergk 1853², 612; West 1977, 97; Sommerstein 2008, 348 (his Aesch. fr. dub. 489a) and Tsantsanoglou 2013, 58-9.

92 *DGE* s.v. γεωμόρος records the following uses of γαμόρος: Aesch. *Supp.* 613, *Eu.* 890, Hdt. 7.155, trag. adesp. fr. 208 K.-Sn., *IGDS* 219.3 (fifth century BC), *Marm. Par.* 36. As Dettori 2006, 42 demonstrated, γαμόρος in *P. Lond. ined.* 2134 (second century AD) is a ghost reading.

93 Sommerstein 2019, 262.

94 Latte 1966, 809.

95 On Aeschylus’s fondness for wordplay see e.g. Tsantsanoglou 2013, 55-6.

96 Dettori 2006, 41.

97 Dettori 2006, 41.

98 Sommerstein 2008, 348.

So much for γαμόρος. The epithet ἐμπεδής (*DGE* s.v. ἐμπεδής I, ‘fijado al suelo con firmeza, estable’) is a hapax.⁹⁹ Although attempts have been made to remove it from the text through the enmendation ἐμμελής, Phot. ε 738 Theodoridis ἐμπεδής γαμόρος protects it. Hesychius’s explanation is very corrupt,¹⁰⁰ but fortunately, the general meaning is sufficiently clear and does not affect the interpretation or the text of the tragic fragment.

Hesychius offers two interpretations of ἐμπεδής. First, the lexicographer explained ἐμπεδής as ἔμπεδος (‘in the ground’, *LSJ*), in reference to the chthonic nature of Hades, whom he calls χθόνιος.¹⁰¹ Similar ideas appear in Eur. *Alc.* 237 χθόνιον παρ’ Ἄιδαν, *Andr.* 544 Ἄιδην χθόνιον, Soph. *OC* 1606 Ζεὺς χθόνιος. In support of this Hesychius quoted a very corrupt line by Hipponax (fr. 146a W.).¹⁰² In a display of folk etymology, Hesychius or his sources probably took ἔμπεδος as ἐν πέδῳ ὢν, meaning ‘the one who is in the earth’.¹⁰³ This folk meaning of ἐμπεδής has a good parallel in an epigram by Leonidas of Tarentum, who refers to Hades as one of the gods who are ‘in or below the earth’ (*AP* 7.480, 7-8 ἀλλά, πρὸς ἐγγαίων Ἄϊδωνέος Ἑρμεία τε | καὶ Νυκτός).¹⁰⁴

Secondly, Hesychius explained it as ‘firm-set’, as Hades has been assigned everything below the surface of the earth (οἶον τὴν γῆν μεριζόμενος) and is therefore a landowner (γαμόρος) that is trustworthy (ἀσφαλής) and attentive (ἐπιμελής), a landowner who allocates each person their proportional share of land for burial. It is clear why Hades is imagined as a steady and reliable landowner: the dead permanently occupy the plot of land he has assigned to them.¹⁰⁵ Dettori cites a funerary inscription from Miletupolis dating from the second century AD in support of this interpretation (*SEG* 34.1247):

99 *DGE* s.v. ἐμπεδής II records two uses of the adverb ἐμπεδέως, -ῶς, with the meanings ‘invariablemente’ (*Carm.Conv.* 22) and ‘sin interrupción’ (Plb. 2.19.1).

100 See the various attempts to correct the text proposed by Latte 1966, 809 and West 1989², 1: 162, as well as the list of conjectures collected by Degani 1991, 153-4 in the app. crit. to Hippon. fr. 159 D.

101 Hesychius’s interpretation undermines the thesis by Onians 1951, 361 fn. 2, that ἐμπεδής refers to the traditional Indo-European concept of death as shackles (πέδαι).

102 In view of the text transmitted by Phot. ε 738 Theodoridis, it is not at all clear that ἔμπεδος in the actual quotation from Hipponax has anything to do with χθόνιος. See Theodoridis 1991, 33-4.

103 e. g. Burges 1821, 194 “in solo, i.e. in solo habitans aut terram sortitus”, West 1989², 1: 162. West 1977, 73, with support from Kannicht, Snell 1981, 73, was inclined to see ἔμπεδος as a euphemistic name for Hades (‘the trustworthy one’). Kannicht, Snell compare the Latin title *Fidius*, but this epicleris has more to do with the guarantee of oaths (*OLD* s.v.).

104 The parallel was provided by Spanoudakis 2002, 168.

105 Dettori 2006, 41, Sommerstein 2008, 348.

καὶ νέκυσ γεωμόρος | εἷς.¹⁰⁶ We may also mention γεωμόριον or γημόριον in the sense of ‘burial plot’ (*LSJ* s.v. γημόριον).

Such a dense and allusive web of ideas, centred on inheritance, landownership, plots of land, death and burial, quickly brings to mind key notions in Aeschylus’s *Seven Against Thebes*. Several lines from this tragedy play with the double meaning of μείρομαι and μοῖρα as inheritance, lot, distribution, land, death and the grave.¹⁰⁷

As for the epic verb μάρπτω, it belongs to common tragic diction: it is used by Aeschylus (2x), Sophocles (3x) and Euripides (7x).¹⁰⁸ In funerary epigrams, μάρπτω has fate (μοῖρα, μόρος, πότμος) or specific causes of death such as illness as its subjects.¹⁰⁹ The motif of death as a swift predator that snatches humans away is alluded to in tragedy (Soph. *El.* 949-50; cf. Lyc. 655). In funerary contexts and in the sense of ‘to lay hold of, seize’, μάρπτω is found in Soph. *OC* 1681 ἄσκοποι δὲ πλάκες ἔμαρψαν;¹¹⁰ cf. also trag. adesp. fr. 127, 6-10 K.-Sn. ὁ δ’ ἀμφιβάλλει ... | ... | ... πολύμοχθος Ἴαιδας. Interestingly, the closest verbal parallels to our fragment are found in actual funerary inscriptions: *CIG* vol. I no.1156 μητέρα τὴν μήπω πικρὸς ἔμαρψ’ Ἀΐδης, *Epigr.Gr.* no. 89 Kaibel τὸν δέ τι παπταίνοντ’ ἐπὶ γούνασι πατρὸς | μάρψας Ἀΐδης ᾧ σκοτίας ἀμφέβαλεν πτέρυγας.¹¹¹

In terms of metre, all three tragedians sometimes place the nom. sg. Ἴαιδης just before the penthemimeral caesura.¹¹²

There are parallels from Aeschylus in terms of vocabulary and content. But do we have a parallel in terms of technique? That is, is there a case in which Aeschylus re-etymologises the meaning of a word to make it refer to Hades through a play on words? Yes, we do. Athen. 3.99B preserves the information that, in an unknown tragedy, Aeschylus called Hades ἀγησίλαον (fr. 406 R.) – a clear play on words, with ἀγησίλαος re-etymologised to mean not so much ‘leader of the people’ as ‘he who carries away people’ (*DGE* s.v.).

106 Dettori 2006, 41.

107 Thalmann 1978, 69-70, 76, Torrance 2007, 172 s.v. ‘imagery, allotment’, Tsantsanoglou 2013, 56-9. The clearest example of this nexus is Aesch. *Th.* 727-33 ξένος δὲ κλήρους ἐπινωμᾶι | Χάλυβος σκυθῶν ἄποικος. | κτεάνων χρηματοδαίτας | πικρὸς, ὠμόφρων σίδαρος, | χθόνα ναίειν διαπήλας | ὀπόσαν καὶ φθιμένους ἐγκατέχειν | τῶν μεγάλων πεδίων ἀμοίρους. To this we may add *Th.* 906-7 ἐμοιράσαντο δ’ ὄξυκάρδιοι | κτήμαθ’ ὥστ’ ἴσον λαχεῖν, 947-50 ἔχουσι μοῖραν λαχόντες ᾧ μέλει | διοδότων ἀχθέων, | ὑπὸ δὲ σώματι γὰρ | πλοῦτος ἄβυσσος ἔσται.

108 Aesch. fr. 47a, 817 R., *Eu.* 597; Eur. fr. 779, 5 K., fr. 979, 4 K., *Alc.* 847, 1142, *Hipp.* 1188, *Hec.* 1061, *Rh.* 681; Soph. *Ai.* 444, *Tr.* 779, *OC* 1681.

109 Almirall 2021, 370, esp. fn. 7, with examples.

110 The invisible (ἄσκοποι) plains are those of the nether world (Jebb 1889, 258, *LSJ* s.v. ἄσκοπος (A)).

111 Kaibel 1878, 30 was the first to point out this *locus similis*.

112 Aesch. *Eu.* 273 (3 ia); Eur. *Hipp.* 1047, *Hec.* 2; Soph. fr. 941, 3 R., *Ai.* 1035, *Ant.* 308, 519, 542.

One last detail points to Aeschylus: his kennings are peculiar in that they supply the *designatum* and “unriddle the riddle from the start”.¹¹³ That is exactly what we see in ἐμπεδῆς γαμόρος ... Ἄιδης.

Thus, the play on words, the allusive density, the vivid metaphor of Hades as a wealthy landowner and the “jarring fusions of concepts” all point to Aeschylus.¹¹⁴ I believe that Sommerstein was absolutely right to include this fragment as fr. dub. 489a in his edition of Aeschylus’s fragments for the Loeb Classical Library.

2.10 trag. adesp. fr. 254 K.-Sn. (Hsch. π 1863 H.)

“περισπερχοῦς βοῆς”: ὑπερεπειγούσης

“Of urgent cries”: pressing.

W. Dindorf (*ThGL*, 1847, col. 923D, s.v. περισπερχής) noted that that the lemma of Hsch. π 1863 H., the second half of an iambic trimeter, came from a tragic poet. The adjective περισπερχής (‘very hasty’) is only clearly attested elsewhere in Soph. *Ai.* 982, in the entire tragic corpus.

Görschen proposed that περισπερχοῦς βοῆς could be the final part of Aesch. fr. 25e, 7 R. Ἰσα δεῖμα καὶ περισπερ.[, from the satyr play *Glaucus the Sea-God* (frr. 25c-34 R.).¹¹⁵ This, if correct, would mean that the lemma in Hesychius’s entry is a fragment by Aeschylus. However, this conjecture faces two serious obstacles.

Firstly, the papyrus that transmitted Aesch. fr. 25e R. (*P. Oxy* 2159) only allows περισπερ.[to be read with complete clarity. There are serious doubts about the letter ρ, and any attempts to fit a form of περισπερχής into the line could well be following a false lead.¹¹⁶ Secondly, περισπερχοῦς is Johannes Alberti’s correction of περισπέρχου, which in turn is Musurus’s conjecture for περισπέκτου – the reading found in Hesychius’s codex. However, if περισπέκτου (a vox nihili) is indeed corrupt, other solutions are also possible, such as Schmidt’s cautious περισπεύστου.¹¹⁷ We cannot

113 The phrase is by Rosenmeyer 1982, 93.

114 Duncan 2023, 215 “Aeschylus’s jarring fusions of concepts pressed the limits of intelligibility to an unmatched and distinctive degree”.

115 Görschen 1950, 43.

116 Lobel 1941, 4 “ρ unsatisfactory, the tail does not descend below the line. The following letter not verifiable”. Dollard 2021, 2: 17, after a new visual inspection of the papyrus, believes that what has been taken until now for the beginning of the loop of a P could rather be the stroke of a K. Cipolla 2018, 125 conjectures, with extreme caution, περισπερξίϛ.

117 Schmidt 1861, 319.

entirely rule out the possibility that περισπερχοῦς is a ghost word here.

Ultimately, it does not matter whether περισπερ[ε..] in Aeschylus's line conceals περισπερχ[οῦς] (Görschen) or περισπέρχ[ιον] (Lloyd-Jones): even if we were certain that this were the case, the lacuna in the papyrus would still prevent us from knowing which noun the adjective was referring to. There is no reason why it should have been βοῆς. For all these considerations, this fragment is unlikely to be related to Aeschylus's *Glaucus the Sea-God* and there is no good reason to attribute it to Aeschylus rather than to Sophocles (cf. *El.* 798 εἰ τήνδ' ἔπαυσας τῆς πολυγλώσσου βοῆς, who was the only tragedian to use the adjective περισπερχής. It should remain among the *adespota*.

**2.11 trag. adesp. fr. 269 ab K.-Sn. = Aesch. fr. inc. fab. 664a
Mette (Hsch. τ 948 H.-C. + κ 4483 L.-C.)**

(a)

“Τιρύνθιον πλίνθε<u>μα”. ἀντί τοῦ τὸ τεῖχος. ὑπὸ Κυ<κ>λώπων δὲ κατεσκευάστο.

“Brickwork of Tiryns”: meaning the wall, because it had been built the Cyclopes.

(b)

“Κυκλώπων ἔδος”. ἐπειδὴ Κύκλωπες ἐτείχισαν τὰς Μυκίνας.

“The Cyclopes’ seat”: because the Cyclopes built the walls of Mycenae.

Meineke proposed that combining the lemma in κ 4483 L.-C. Κυκλώπων ἔδος - the second half of an iambic trimeter from the hepthemimeral caesura - with the lemma of τ 948. H.-C. Τιρύνθιον πλίνθευμα - the first half up to the hepthemimeral caesura - would result in a regular iambic trimeter worthy of a classical tragedy: Τιρύνθιον πλίνθευμα, Κυκλώπων ἔδος.¹¹⁸

However, the resulting pseudo-Aeschylean ponderousness is misleading; only Euripides provides examples of constructions similar to Κυκλώπων ἔδος, specifically in *HF* 944 Κύκλωπων βάρθρα (in the

118 Meineke 1843, 51. This opinion was followed, among others, by Nauck 1889², 890-1, who thought it was an Aeschylean fragment, Wecklein 1893, 656 (Aesch. fr. dub. 470 of his edition) and Mette 1959, 232.

same metrical position) and *IA* 152 ἐπὶ Κυκλώπων εἰς θυμέλας.¹¹⁹ Conversely, the allusion to the Cyclopean walls of Mycenae and Argos is a favourite device of Euripides's, as seen in *El.* 1158, *HF* 15, *Tr.* 1088, *Or.* 965-6, *IA* 265, 534, 1501. Of the other tragedians, only Sophocles mentions them in fr. 227 R. (Κυκλώπιον τροχόν, the circuit of the walls of Mycenae).

While the resulting iambic trimeter is very pleasing, Wilamowitz raised a fatal objection to Meineke's proposal.¹²⁰ Hesychius's entries refer to different cities, one to Tiryns and the other to Mycenae, meaning they could not be part of the same line. Greek tragedians regularly conflated Argos with Mycenae, but not with Tiryns.¹²¹ Kannicht and Snell printed both lemmata as trag. adesp. fr. 269ab on the basis that they came from the same dramatic context, albeit not the same iambic trimeter.¹²² However, there is no evidence that the two lemmata belong to the same passage, let alone the same play.

2.12 trag. adesp. fr. 291 K.-Sn. = Aesch. fr. dub. 489b Sommerstein (*Luc. Pisc.* 2)

καὶ μὴν ἄριστον ἦν καθάπερ τινὰ Πενθέα ἢ Ὀρφέα “λακιστὸν ἐν πέτραισιν εὐρέσθαι μόνον,” ἵνα ἂν καὶ τὸ μέρος αὐτοῦ ἕκαστος ἔχων ἀπηλλάττετο.

Really, the best thing would be for him “to bring death on himself torn to pieces among the rocks”, just like some Pentheus or Orpheus, so that each of us could leave with a piece of him.

In *Luc. Pisc.* 2, a group of famous philosophers capture Lucian's alter ego and deliberate over the appropriate punishment for his mockery. Socrates proposes that Lucian should die in a way that'd satisfy everyone he has offended. Several of the philosophers helpfully suggest various capital punishments. Plato interjects, suggesting that the most fitting death would be one like that suffered by Orpheus or Pentheus - being dismembered - and to add a veneer of high culture to his opinion, he quotes an iambic trimeter clearly taken from a tragedy.

The quotation's context indicates that it can be applied to both the deaths of Orpheus, who was torn to pieces by Thracian women on Mount Pangaion (Aesch. fr. 23a R.), and Pentheus, who was torn

¹¹⁹ Barnes 1778, 490.

¹²⁰ Wilamowitz 1895, 210.

¹²¹ Bond 1981, 66.

¹²² Kannicht, Snell 1981, 84.

apart by his mother on Mount Cithaeron (Eur. *Ba.* 1125-36). In other words, it is unclear whether the quotation comes from a tragedy about Orpheus or Pentheus. Both characters feature in several tragedies: Pentheus appeared in Aeschylus's *Wool-Carters* (fr. 172b R.), Euripides's *Bacchae*, and plays named *Pentheus* by Aeschylus (fr. 183 R.), Iophon (22 F 2 Sn.-K.), and Lycophron (100 F 6 Sn.-K.). Orpheus appeared in Aeschylus's *Bassarids*.¹²³

Samuel Musgrave proposed that the line originated from Euripides's *Bacchae*, specifically from the lacuna of approximately 50 lines after l. 1329.¹²⁴ According to Apsines p. 322 Hammer (= Baccharum appendix test. II, p. 352 Diggle), holding the torn limbs of her son in her hands, Agave lamented each one in the lost part of *Bacchae*.¹²⁵ However, this is not the only possible hypothesis. West also suggested that it could be from Aeschylus's *Bassarids* (fr. 23-5 R.), in which Thracian devotees of Dionysus tore Orpheus to pieces and scattered his limbs (Eratosth. *Cat.* 24).¹²⁶ The line would fit equally well in the scene described in *Bacchae* and in a messenger's speech from *Bassarids*.

Nevertheless, there are a few small lexical clues that suggest Aeschylus may be the author. First off, regarding εὔρεσθαι μόρον, Aeschylus is the only tragedian to use the expression 'to bring death on oneself' or 'to find one's death' with an adjective defining the type of death: *Th.* 879-80 οἱ μελέους θανάτους | ἡύροντο (lyr). Secondly, concerning λακιστὸν ... μόρον, Aeschylus uses the word μόρος accompanied by an adjective to describe the instrument or manner of death three times: Aesch. fr. dub. 478 R. πισσοκώνητον μόρον (death by being tarred with pitch and then set on fire), *Th.* 199 λευστήρα δήμου δ' οὐ τι μὴ φύγη μόρον (death by stoning), *Supp.* 987 δορικανεῖ μόρω (death by the spear, Porson's palmary emendation for M's nonsensical δόρυκ' ἀνημέρω).¹²⁷ Finally, in all of Greek tragedy, only Aeschylus uses the surprisingly infrequent expression

123 Radt 1985, 138, West 1990, 36. We know nothing of the plot of Aristias's *Orpheus* (9 F 5 Sn.-K.) or Aeschylus's *Bacchae* (fr. 22 R.).

124 *ap.* Porson 1815, 169.

125 Dodds 1960², 57 considered it unlikely ("parum probabiliter") and Diggle 1994, 356 relegated it to fr. iii of the fragmenta dubia of *Bacchae*.

126 West 1990, 46.

127 To be fair, both *Soph. Tr.* 357 ὁ ῥίπτος Ἰφίτου μόρος and *Eur. Rh.* 817 καρανιστῆς μόρος also employed this stylistic device. However, there are some qualifications to be made: in the first instance, it is probably an enallage (Davies 1991, 121); in the second instance, the author of *Rhesus*, as Fries 2014, 421 shows, actually imitates Aesch. *Eu.* 186-7 ἀλλ' οὐ καρανιστῆρες ὀφθαλμωρύχοι | δίκαι σφαγαί τε.

ἐν πέτραισι, with the preposition ἐν and the old literary plural dative.¹²⁸ He used it in the same metrical position as in our fragment, filling the line from the third element to the hepthemimeral caesura: Aesch. *Ag.* 1234 οἰκοῦσαν ἐν πέτραισι, ναυτίλων βλάβην. The fragment's rhythm, with no resolutions, points towards a *severior* style. The hepthemimeral caesura occurs roughly 40% more frequently in the works of Aeschylus and Sophocles than in those of Euripides.¹²⁹

In my opinion, these are sufficient reasons to suspect Aeschylean authorship, as Sommerstein did when printing the line as fr. 489b of Aeschylus's doubtfully ascribed fragments.¹³⁰ He rightly rejects West's attribution to Aeschylus's *Bassarids*, noting that it may come from Aeschylus's *Wool-Carders* or *Pentheus* just as well (cf. *Eum.* 26 λαγῶ δίκην Πενθεῖ καταρράφας μόρον).

2.13 trag. adesp. fr. 375 K.-Sn. = Aesch. fr. dub. 472 Wecklein, 489c Sommerstein (Plut. *de superst.* 166A)

ἀλλ' εἴ σ' ἔνυπνον φάντασμα φοβεῖ
χθονίας θ' Ἐκάτης κῶμον ἐδέξω

But if you are terrified by a vision in your dreams | and have opened the door to the revellers of Hecate beneath the earth

In *de superst.* 166A Plutarch described the plight of the superstitious individual, who cannot forget their fear of the gods, even in sleep, and is compelled to seek the assistance of magicians to rid themselves of nightmares. Plutarch quotes to that effect two anapaestic dimeters, originally chanted by the chorus of a tragedy. The members of the chorus ask someone about the fears caused by a dream.

Due to its similarity to Aesch. *Th.* 710-11 ἐνυπνίων φαντασμάτων | ὄψεις, Porson thought it might have been written by Aeschylus.¹³¹ Two elements point to him: the lexical similarity of the first line to Aesch. *Th.* 710-11, noted *supra*, and the metaphor implied by κῶμος in the second line. Mette was more specific, suggesting cautiously that the two lines belonged to Aeschylus's *Glauclus* of

128 Compare with Eur. *Andr.* 1145 πέτραισιν (at the beginning of the line, without preposition), Eur. *Cyc.* 324 ἐν τῆδε πέτραι (up to the penthemimeral caesura), Soph. *Ph.* 272 ἐν καταρρεφεί πέτρῳ (after the penthemimeral caesura). ἐν πέτραισι appears in Theoc. 9.116, Lyc. 390, Mosch. *epitaph. Bionis* 30 and AP 11.437. Lyc. 390, an iambic trimeter, has ἐν πέτραισι in the same metrical position as in this fragment.

129 Once in five lines in Aeschylus and Sophocles and once in seven lines in Euripides (West 1982, 82).

130 Sommerstein 2008, 348.

131 Porson 1824, 44.

Potniae (fr. 36-42a R.). A fragment of this play reveals that someone is recounting a bad dream (fr. **36b, 1 R. ἔδοξε γαρ[); with the chorus, in anapests (or possibly in dactyl-epitrites), mentioning nocturnal visions, φάσματα, as in our fragment (9-10]ν μελάθρων |]φάσματα).¹³²

The metaphor based on κῶμος in the second line also brings Aeschylus to mind. The infernal goddess Hecate was accompanied by a retinue of ghosts during her night time visits to the world of the living, and she had the power to send nightmares and apparitions.¹³³ The metaphor Ἐκάτης κῶμον implies that these apparitions behave like a gang of young revellers who hang around outside a friend's or lover's house until they answer the door – a festive custom the Greeks called δέχεσθαι κῶμον.¹³⁴ This inversion of the merry nature of the κῶμος also appears in *Agamemnon*. Cassandra has a vision of the Erinyes perched on the roof of Agamemnon's house (ll. 1186-90): τὴν γὰρ στέγην τὴνδ' οὔ ποτ' ἐκλείπει χορὸς | Ξύμφοθγος οὐκ εὐφωνος· οὐ γὰρ εὖ λέγει. | καὶ μὴν πεπωκῶς γ', ὡς θρασύνεσθαι πλέον, | βρότειον αἶμα κῶμος ἐν δόμοις μένει, | δύσπεμπος ἔξω, συγγόνων Ἐρινύων. She describes the dread goddesses as revellers or party-goers, singing drunkenly and out of tune in the street and disturbing the house. However, in this case, their drunkenness is caused by human blood rather than wine. Their voices are dissonant not because they are drunk, but because they sing maledictions. They cannot be driven from the house or the street because they are Erinyes, not only because they are loud and overbearing like a group of drunks.¹³⁵ The perversion of everyday habits and joyful actions to create horror is precisely a hallmark of Aeschylus,¹³⁶ a technique that we see reflected here.

However, this fragment requires caution. There are close stylistic parallels in Euripides as well. With regard to the first line, ἀλλ' εἴ σ' ἔνυπνον φάντασμα φοβεῖ, compare Eur. *Hec.* 703-5 ἔμαθον ἐνύπνιον ὀμμάτων | ἐμῶν ὄψιν (οὐ με παρέβα φάντα- | σμα μελανόπτερον). Metaphors based on the perversion of the κῶμος' festive behaviour can be found in Euripides's work on three occasions:¹³⁷ Eur. *Supp.* 390 κῶμον δέχεσθαι τὸν ἐμὸν ἀσπιδηφόρον (trim), *Ph.* 352-3 εἶτε τὸ δαιμόνιον κατεκώμασε | δώμασιν Οἰδιπόδα (lyr) and *Ph.* 790bis κῶμον ἀναυλότατον προχορεύεις (lyr). In the first of these instances,

132 Mette 1963, 9 fn. 1. There are other possible interpretations, such as a messenger-speech and not the report of a dream. See Radt 1985, 151; Sommerstein 2008, 34.

133 Kannicht 1969, 160.

134 On this festive custom see Knox, Headlam 1922, 82-3; Medda 2024, 3: 213.

135 Medda 2024, 3: 213-15.

136 Fraenkel 1950, 228-9, 544; Garvie 1986, 337.

137 Medda 2024, 3: 215.

Theseus orders the Theban herald to agree to peacefully bury the bodies of the Seven, or, with dark irony, prepare for the visit of an armed κῶμος: his army. In the second case, a hostile god has brought a revel of destruction upon the house of Oedipus (κατεκῶμασε). In the third instance, bloodthirsty Ares leads the revel of war as if he were the leader or a κῶμος. Eur. *Supp.* 390 even uses the very same expression, κῶμον δέχεσθαι, and *Ph.* 352-3 shares the portrait of a hostile divine visitation as a κῶμος. Although all three tragedians mention Hecate by name,¹³⁸ only Euripides highlights her role as a source of apparitions and hallucinations: *Hel.* 569 ὦ φωσφόρ' Ἑκάτη, πέμπτε φάσματ' εὐμενῆ.

Therefore, style and imagery lead us to conclude that we have as many reasons to think of Euripides as we do Aeschylus.

2.14 trag. adesp. fr. 391 K.-Sn. = Aesch. fr. dub. 489D Sommerstein (Plut. *de sera num. vind.* 554F)

θύννος βολαῖος πέλαγος ὡς διαστροβεῖ

It stirs up the sea like a tunny-fish caught in the net

In *de sera num. vind.* 554F Plutarch argues that the fears and remorse that torment the criminal also constitute punishment, which he compares to the desperate movements of a tunny-fish at the moment of being caught. Plutarch supports the vivid image with an iambic trimeter, which he also quotes in *Vit. Luc.* 491F, in this case to describe an intense oratorical style. There is a textual variant: compared to the present διαστροβεῖ in 554F, in 491F he uses the imperfect διειστρόβει. In both cases, the tense depends on that of the sentence in which the line is quoted: present in the first case, and past in the second.

Most scholars agree in attributing the fragment to Aeschylus.¹³⁹ In my opinion, quite rightly so, because Aeschylus is, curiously enough, the only tragedian who mentions tunny-fish in his tragedies: three times (fr. 307, 2 R., fr. 308 R., *Pers.* 424) compared to zero for the rest

¹³⁸ Aesch. fr. 388, 1 R.; Eur. fr. 62h K., *Hel.* 569, *Med.* 397, *Tr.* 323, *Ph.* 110; Soph. fr. 535, 2 R. In Aesch. fr. 388 R., while the chorus does invoke Hecate in anapaests, it addresses her directly in the form of the statue erected before the palace's doors. In other words, despite the similarities between the two fragments – the metre, the speaker, and the mention of the goddess – the contexts appear to differ greatly (protection versus the sending of nightmares).

¹³⁹ e.g. Paley 1879⁴, 399; Sommerstein 2008, 350-1 (his fr. dub. 489d).

of the tragedians.¹⁴⁰ The resolved third *longum* produces a ‘dactyl’ in the third foot, the most common resolution in tragedy.¹⁴¹

Due to its subject matter, Stark linked the fragment to Aeschylus’s satyr play *Net-Haulers* (fr. 46a-7c R.).¹⁴² Sommerstein, without denying this possibility, pointed out that it could also belong to the account of the sea wonders described by the shepherd in fr. 25e R. of *Glaucus the Sea-God* (fr. 25c-34 R.), another satyr-play by Aeschylus.¹⁴³ In the first case, that is to say *Net-Haulers*, it would refer to the moment when the Satyrs spot or pull out of the sea the floating chest in which Danaë is enclosed with her son Perseus; in the second, to the first appearance of the fisherman Glaucus of Anthedon coming out of the sea in his new monstrous form after becoming a god.¹⁴⁴

The implied comparison here is to the violent thrashing of the tunny-fish as they try to break free from the nets of the tunny-trap.¹⁴⁵ The vocabulary and simile also appear in Aesch. *Pers.* 424-6 τοὶ δ’ ὥστε θύννους ἢ τιν’ ἰχθύων βόλον | ... | ἔπαιον, ἐρράχιζον. In these lines the messenger horrifiedly describes the terrible ending of the Persian soldiers at sea, battered and hacked to death by the Greeks like so many tunnies or like fish caught in a net. The startling image likely was derived from Aeschylus’s own observation; that is to say, it’s not traditional.¹⁴⁶

2.15 trag. adesp. fr. 405 K.-Sn. = Aesch. fr. dub. 473 Wecklein (Plut. *amat.* 758B)

ἔστι δέ τις ἐκεῖ κομιστὴρ ἐνθένδε καὶ ἄρωγός ἐν τέλει γενομένων
κατευναστής καὶ ψυχοπομπὸς ὥσπερ οὗτος·

οὐ γάρ με Νῦξ ἔτικτε δεσπότην λύρας,
οὐ μάντιν οὐδ’ ἱατρόν, ἀλλὰ †θνητὸν ἅμα†
ψυχαῖς

3

There is still some god who escorts them from here to there, a helper for those who have reached their end, someone who lays

140 It also appears in Lyc. 381.

141 Ceadel 1941, 85.

142 Stark 1959, 341.

143 Sommerstein 2008, 350-1.

144 Sommerstein 2008, 350-1.

145 I am persuaded by Fraenkel 1958, 285-7, who derived βολαῖος from βόλος (‘net’, *DGE* s.v. II 1). *LSJ* and *DGE* s.v. translate it as ‘violent’ and ‘impetuoso, impulsivo’ (from βολή), following Eust. *II.* 1404, 52.

146 Garvie 2009, 201.

them to sleep and guides their souls, like the the god in question said: “For Night did not beget me to be lord of the lyre, | nor a seer nor a physician, but †mortal along with† | the souls”.

Plut. *amat.* 758B provides examples of how every stage of human life is under the protection of the gods, including difficult stages such as childbirth (Ilithyia), illness (Asclepius) and death. To illustrate the latter, Plutarch quotes two iambic trimeters and the beginning of a third put into the mouth of the god who watches over men in such a predicament.

Plutarch does not reveal the speaker’s name, referring to him as οὔτος, presumably as a euphemism. However, it is evident that he is Thanatos, the personification of death and the son of Night (Hes. *Th.* 211-12).¹⁴⁷ His interlocutor is most likely Apollo, characterised by his possession of the lyre and by his roles as diviner and physician.¹⁴⁸

Gottfried Hermann emended Plutarch’s introductory words ὥσπερ οὔτος into ὥσπερ ὁ αὐτός, assuming the author was Aeschylus and referring it specifically to his tragedy *The Weighing of Souls* (frr. 279-80a R.).¹⁴⁹ However, what we know about the plot of this play makes it difficult to incorporate a speech by Thanatos into it. Hermann’s attribution to Aeschylus is based on the assumption that our fragment is preceded by a supposed quotation from Aeschylus. The problem is that such a quotation does not exist; Hermann had fashioned it out of Plutarch’s innocent words ἔστι δέ τις ἐκεῖ κομιστήρ ... ἐν τέλει γενομένων.

Wecklein accepted Hermann’s attribution and printed the fragment as his Aesch. fr. dub. 473, noting that it bears the stamp of Aeschylean style (“hoc fragmentum habitum Aeschyleae orationis prae se fert”).¹⁵⁰ Doubtless, he had in mind Aesch. *Eu.* 321-4 μάτερ ἄ μ’ ἔτικτες ... | Νύξ, ἀλαοῖσι καὶ δεδορκόσιν | ποιάναν, κλυθῶ· ὁ Λατοῦς γὰρ ἴ-|νις μ’ ἄτιμον τίθησιν and *Eu.* 60-2 τῶνδε δεσπότηρ δόμων | αὐτῶ μελέσθω Λοξίαι μεγασθενεῖ· | ἰατρόμαντις δ’ ἔστι καὶ τερασκόπος. It is also highly likely that Thanatos was a character in one or both of Aeschylus’s *Sisyphus* plays (frr. 225-34 R.).

However, the similarities are general and the words in the fragment are too common to make a decision either way.¹⁵¹ If anything, there

¹⁴⁷ Kannicht, Snell 1981, 120. Older editors (e.g. Smyth 1957, 511) thought incorrectly that the speaker was Sleep.

¹⁴⁸ Stephanopoulos 1988, 230.

¹⁴⁹ *ap.* Winckelmann 1836, 166-7.

¹⁵⁰ Wecklein 1893, 657.

¹⁵¹ Unfortunately †θνητὸν ἅμα (codd. : ἠγήτορα Valckenaer : ἄλλ’ ὀνήτορα Bergk) in l. 2, with an unacceptable resolution in the sixth foot, is corrupt and no decision should be made on the basis of scholars’ emendations.

are three small details that point away from Aeschylus. οὐ γάρ με at the beginning of the line is attested three times in Euripides (fr. 661, 28 K., *Hec.* 1258, *Hel.* 576), two times in Sophocles (*OT* 1325, *Ph.* 1358) and none in Aeschylus.¹⁵² The expression ‘to give birth to someone not as ... but as ...’ (οὐ ... με Νὺξ ἔτικτε δεσπότην ... | ... ἀλλὰ ...) appears also in Eur. *Tr.* 747-8 οὐ σφάγιον <υἶόν> Δαναΐδαις τέξουσ’ ἔμῳ, | ἀλλ’ ὡς τύραννον (cf. also *IA* 1386 πᾶσι γάρ μ’ Ἑλλησι κοινὸν ἔτεκες, οὐχὶ σοὶ μόνῃ), but not in Aeschylus. As strange as it may sound, the dative plural ψυχῶν is only attested three times in tragedy: here, in Eur. fr. 1007d, 3 K. and in *Ion* 19 F 6 Sn.-K. On the other hand, the first two lines of the fragment each contain a hephthemimeral caesura, a placement that appears roughly 29% less often in Euripides than in Aeschylus and Sophocles (see *supra* 2.12).¹⁵³

Although it is slight, the evidence from style and metre seems to point away from both Aeschylus and Euripides. The situation is reminiscent of the prologue to Euripides’s *Alcestis*, in which Apollo and Thanatos engage in a violent altercation and Thanatos is forced to remind the younger god of his powers (ll. 49-57). Therefore, we may be looking at a fragment of Phrynichus’s *Alcestis*, which included Apollo (3 F 1c Sn.-K.) and Thanatos (3 F 3 Sn.-K.) in the cast of characters, and which Euripides imitated.¹⁵⁴

2.16 adesp. trag. fr. 425 K.-Sn. = Aesch. fr. 115 Mette (Poll. 1.14)

αἱ δὲ θήλειαι ἰέρειαι, προφήτιδες, καὶ “ἔργων μυστικῶν προφάντιδες”

The female (*scil.* priests) are called ‘priestesses’, ‘prophetesses’, and “interpreters of the mysteries”

Poll. 1.14 provides a list of at least 19 names for various types of male priest, and adds a further four for female priests. Among these names is προφάντιδες, which Pollux illustrates by quoting an incomplete iambic trimeter (the first foot and the *breve* of the second are

152 Contrast οὐ γάρ μ’ ἔθρεψαν (Aesch. *Supp.* 894). Aeschylus did not find the rhythm objectionable: compare οὐ γάρ τι (fr. 75 R., *Ch.* 755, *Eum.* 625), οὐ γάρ τὸ (*Pers.* 373), οὐ γάρ τὰ (*Pers.* 851), οὐ γάρ σὺ (*Pr.* 994), all of which appear at the beginning of the line. Given these examples, the absence of οὐ γάρ με in *scriptio plena* in his poetry strikes me as unusual. Furthermore, Euripides (5x) and Sophocles (2x) have οὐ – με at the beginning of the line (with – being the first *longum*), but Aeschylus never does.

153 That is to say, given the average frequencies (1/5 for Aeschylus and Sophocles, 1/7 for Euripides), the probability that the author of any two consecutive lines with hephthemimeral caesura is Euripides is approximately 34%, while the probability that it is an author who employs the hephthemimeral caesura once every five lines is about 66%.

154 Stephanopoulos 1988, 230; Cropp 2019, 30-1.

missing). Nauck included it among the tragic fragments, comparing the title of Aeschylus's tragedy *Priestesses* (Ἰέρειαι, fr. 86-8 R.), from which he suspected it originated.¹⁵⁵

One small piece of evidence in favour of Aeschylus is that he is the only tragedian to use the adjective μυστικός, in fr. inc. fab. 387 R. ἐρῶ δὲ τοῦδε μυστικοῦ τέλους. Besides its title, there is also some circumstantial evidence in favour of Nauck's suspicion that it might come from *Priestesses*. In this tragedy the chorus was comprised of Artemis's priestesses, charged with the task of opening her temple (fr. 87 R.). *Priestesses* was one of the five plays for which Aeschylus was accused of divulging the mysteries, τὰ μυστικά (Anon. in Arist. *EN* 1111a8 = Aesch. test. 93b 2-3 R.). Therefore, Mette boldly printed adesp. fr. 425 K.-Sn. as his fr. 115 of Aeschylus's *Priestesses*, but this attribution should be treated with extreme caution, and the fragment should not be used to reconstruct the play.

2.17 trag. adesp. fr. 519 K.-Sn. = Aesch. fr. inc. fab. 524, 1 Mette (Stob. 3.4.16)

οὐ χρὴ ποδώκη τὸν τρόπον λίαν φορεῖν

One should not have a manner that is too swift-footed

In his edition of books III–IV of Stobaeus, Vittore Trincavelli printed together without a lemma as part of Stob. 3.4.15 the three lines Πρὶν γὰρ φρονεῖν εὖ, καταφρονεῖν ἐπίστασαι. | Οὐ χρὴ ποδώκη τὸν τρόπον λίαν φορεῖν. | σφαλεῖς γὰρ οὐδεὶς εὖ βεβουλεῦσθαι δοκεῖ.¹⁵⁶ Based on this, and on the figurative use of the term ποδώκη, Hermann attributed to οὐ χρὴ ποδώκη ... βεβουλεῦσθαι δοκεῖ, the last two lines, the lemma Αἰσχύλου that headed 3.4.18 (= Aesch. fr. 392 R.). He thought that the line quoted in *ecl.* 18 was not by Aeschylus and therefore the lemma was displaced from its correct place.¹⁵⁷

However, the testimony of the *MA* manuscripts makes this proposal impossible: both omit the line οὐ χρὴ ποδώκη τὸν τρόπον λίαν φορεῖν in the sequence and both precede the remaining two, whose order

¹⁵⁵ Nauck 1889², 28, 921.

¹⁵⁶ Hense 1894, 223, l. 1. Currently, following Hense's edition, they are printed as *ecl.* 15 (= Chaerem. 71 F 25 Sn.-K.), 16 (= trag. adesp. 519 K.-Sn.), 17 (= Chaerem. 71 F 26 Sn.-K.) and 18 (= Aesch. fr. 392 R.).

¹⁵⁷ Hermann 1828, 140. Hermann's proposal was supported by Mette 1959, 193, who printed the line as fr. 524, 1 in his edition of Aeschylus's fragments. He thought that [λιφ[]δοκεῖ:] in the scant remains of *P. Oxy* 2255 fr. 39 (= Aesch. fr. 451m 39 R.) referred to λίαν and δοκεῖ in the passage from Stobaeus. However, the space and the hand do not permit this (Radt 1985, 477).

they interchange, with the lemma τοῦ αὐτοῦ, that is, Χαίρημονος, quoted in *ecl.* 14 immediately before.¹⁵⁸ Therefore, πρὶν γὰρ φρονεῖν εὔ, καταφρονεῖν ἐπίστασαι (*ecl.* 15) and σφαλεῖς γὰρ οὐδεῖς εὔ βεβουλευσθαι δοκεῖ (*ecl.* 17) belong to Chaeremon (respectively, 71 F 25 and 26 Sn.-K.), while *ecl.* 16 is necessarily from a different and unidentified tragedian: the lemma has been lost, as is often the case.

That said, Radt still argued that Hermann may have been correct in the case of *ecl.* 16:¹⁵⁹ only Aeschylus was bold enough to use the adjective ποδώκης ('swift-footed') in a figurative sense: *Th.* 623 ποδῶκες ὄμμα ('swift-footed eye'), *Ch.* 576 ποδῶκει ... χαλκεύματι ('with swift-footed sword'). Another small clue in favour of Aeschylus's authorship is that only this tragedian uses τὸν τρόπον in the accusative singular and with an article (*Supp.* 232).¹⁶⁰ There are no resolutions in the line.

However, there are other indications against his authorship, probably unconscious, which therefore have greater probative value. Aeschylus uses the adverb λίαν only twice, curiously both times in *Prometheus Bound* (124, 1031); in both cases the metrical position is not the same as here. On the other hand, λίαν seems to be a favourite word of Euripides's. It appears 43 times, five of which are in the same metrical position as our fragment, filling the fifth foot.¹⁶¹ Sophocles uses λίαν five times, including once in the fifth foot.¹⁶²

The meaning of the verb φορέω as 'of features, qualities, etc., of mind or body, possess, hold, bear' (*LSJ* s.v. I 3) is not attested in Aeschylus, but it is in Sophocles (*Ant.* 705 μή νυν ἐν ἦθος μοῦνον ἐν σαυτῷ φέρει), and in Agathon (39 F 14 γυνή το<ι> σώμα<τος> δι' ἀργίαν | ψυχῆς φρόνησιν ἐντὸς οὐκ ἀργὸν φορεῖ). It goes without saying how closely Sophocles's construction ἦθος [...] φέρει resembles τὸν τρόπον ... φορεῖν. As for the content of the line, the idea that an overly quick temperament leads to countless evils is a common one.¹⁶³ Euripides uses the adjective ὠκύς to express this same notion in fr. 1032 K. τὸ δ' ὠκὺ τοῦτο καὶ τὸ λαιψηρὸν φρενῶν | εἰς συμφορὰν καθῆκε πολλὰ δὴ βροτούς. On his part, Sophocles employs the adjective ποδώκης in *Ant.* 1104 θεῶν ποδῶκεις ... Βλάβαι, albeit in a literal sense in his case.

158 Hense 1894, 222-3.

159 Radt 1985, 366.

160 adesp. fr. 182 N.² μί' εὐγένεια τὸν τρόπον χρηστὸν φέρειν was written by Gregory of Nazianzus; it isn't a real tragic fragment.

161 Eur. *Hipp.* 467 οὐδ' ἐκπονεῖν τοι χρηβίον λίαν βροτούς, 487 δόμους τ' ἀπόλλυσ', οἱ καλοὶ λίαν λόγοι, Eur. *El.* 296 γνώμην ἐνεῖναι τοῖς σοφοῖς λίαν σοφίην, Eur. *IA* 924 ἔστιν μὲν οὖν ἴν' ἡδὺ μὴ λίαν φρονεῖν, 977 πῶς ἂν σ' ἐπαινέσαιμι μὴ λίαν λόγοις.

162 Soph. *El.* 1172 θνητὸς δ' Ὀρέστης ὥστε μὴ λίαν στένε.

163 Kannicht 2004, 993-4.

Therefore, in my opinion, this fragment should not be attributed to Aeschylus without further consideration. If the first part of the compound ποδώκης is otiose, as it may well be,¹⁶⁴ then Sophocles and Euripides would be equally likely candidates.

ποδώκης is one of Achilles's epithets (*LSJ* s.v. ποδώκης 1). Therefore, Hermann suggested that the line may have been uttered by Priam and directed at Achilles, who was renowned for his fierceness and nimble feet.¹⁶⁵ However, this epithet also applies to Atalanta (*Hes.* fr. 76, 5, 20 Sn.-M.), and in tragedy, the line loses all connection with Achilles (*LSJ* s.v. ποδώκης 2). In short, we don't know who said it or who it was said to.

2.18 trag. adesp. fr. 564a K.-Sn. (Sud. π 54)

εὐεργετῆσαι γὰρ τὸ σῶμ' οὐ βούλομαι

For I do not wish to benefit the body

Sud. π 54 explains the meaning of the adjective παλαιγενές as 'most venerable' (πρεσβύτατον), and clarifies that, in Attic, adjectives meaning 'old, elderly' can also mean 'simple-minded, foolish' (*DGE* s.v. ἀρχαῖος A iiic). This usage is illustrated with two examples: *Aristoph. Nu.* 358 and *Eur.* fr. 1088 K (ἀρχαῖον εἴρηκας). The quotation from Euripides is followed by an unattributed iambic trimeter, which does not belong to it and has nothing to do with the lemma.¹⁶⁶ There are no resolutions in the line.

Enger noted that the line conveys the idea that someone does not wish to do good services to a corpse.¹⁶⁷ He related this to *Aesch.* fr. 266 R., a fragment from *Phrygians or The Ransom of Hector*, in which someone tries to convince Achilles that it makes no difference whether one is a benefactor to a corpse or not (1-2 καὶ τοὺς θανόντας εἰ θέλεις εὐεργετήσῃν | εἴτ' ἂν κακουργήσῃν, ἅμα δὲ ἔχει), as the dead person no longer feels anything. Certainly, the similarity in wording is striking (εὐεργετῆσαι ... τὸ σῶμ' οὐ βούλομαι ~ τοὺς θανόντας ... θέλεις εὐεργετήσῃν). According to Enger, we have a dialogue between Achilles and Priam in the context of the ransoming of Hector's body; the fragment preserved in the *Suda* are Achilles's words (εὐεργετῆσαι γὰρ τὸ σῶμ' οὐ βούλομαι), to which Priam replies with the five lines that make up *Aesch.* fr. 266 R. (τοὺς θανόντας εἰ θέλεις εὐεργετεῖν κτλ.).

¹⁶⁴ Hutchinson 1985, 141.

¹⁶⁵ Hermann 1852a, 381.

¹⁶⁶ Kannicht, Snell 1981, 156.

¹⁶⁷ Enger 1863, 26.

This is a very astute suggestion, but we cannot be sure that it is Priam who speaks Aesch. fr. 266 R. It could also be Thetis, or Hermes.¹⁶⁸

Similarly, the word εὐεργετέω is not exclusive to Aeschylus. The verb is used ten times by Euripides, with εὐεργετῆσαι in the same metrical position at the beginning of a line in *Alc.* 860 εὐεργετῆσαι φῶτα γενναῖος γεγώς. In fact, Crusius thought the line belonged to him.¹⁶⁹ Due to the fragment's physical closeness to Eur. fr. 1088 K. and its thematic similarity to Eur. fr. 176 K., which is an argument about the insensitivity of a corpse, he postulated that ἀρχαῖον εἶρηκας (Eur. fr. 1088 K. "You have said a foolish thing") and εὐεργετῆσαι γὰρ τὸ σῶμ' οὐ βούλομαι were part of the same Euripidean passage and had a coherent meaning between them. The meaning would be: "You have said something foolish: I don't want to benefit a corpse (*scil.* because it feels nothing)". οὐ βούλομαι filling the last metron of the trimeter occurs in Eur. *Cyc.* 644, *Ion* 657, 1381, *Or.* 409 and *Soph. El.* 1043, but never in Aeschylus.

Aeschylus and Euripides aren't the only candidates, either. The idea that mistreating a corpse is pointless because it no longer feels anything was topical.¹⁷⁰ The Hellenistic tragedian Moschion, an attentive student of Euripides's style, wrote a very famous historical tragedy entitled *Men of Pherae*, one of whose main themes was the futility of mistreating a corpse (97 F 3).¹⁷¹ As there are no resolutions to the line,¹⁷² and Moschion was a favourite among anthologists – we owe ten of his twelve fragments to Stobaeus – he cannot be excluded.

Unfortunately, the position of the postpositive γὰρ in the line doesn't help to determine authorship. If γὰρ is considered independent from the word with which the sentence-rhythm unites it (εὐεργετῆσαι), the penthemimeral caesura would fall right before it, which would suggest Euripides. If it isn't treated as an independent word, it would create a median caesura, which would suggest Aeschylus or Sophocles or a comic poet.¹⁷³

Although I am sympathetic to Enger's proposal, primarily because of the striking quality of the expression εὐεργετῆσαι ... τὸ σῶμ', there are simply too many potential authors. Gaiser even attributed the line

168 Radt 1985, 367.

169 Crusius 1890, 696.

170 On this topic, Stob. 4.57 quotes Mosch. 97 F 3 Sn.-K. (*eccl.* 3); Eur. fr. 176 K. (*eccl.* 5); Aesch. fr. 266 R. (*eccl.* 6); Mosch. 97 F 7 Sn.-K. (*eccl.* 14).

171 Cropp 2021, 242.

172 There are no trisyllabic feet in Moschion's fragments, which amount to 67 lines (Ceadel 1941, 88).

173 See Maas 1962, 86 § 137.

to comedy, not tragedy.¹⁷⁴ Therefore, this fragment should remain among the *adespota*.

2.19 trag. adesp. fr. 569 K.-Sn. = Aesch. fr. 224 (?) Mette (Trypho *Trop.* 4, p. 169 Sandri)

Τεῦκρος δὲ τόξων χρώμενος φειδωλία
ὑπὲρ τάφρου πηδῶντας ἔστησε<ν> Φρύγας

Yet Teucer, using his arrows with careful precision, | stopped the Phrygians mid-leap over the ditch.

The laudatory mention of Teucer's bravery and the accuracy of his aim suggests that this hero was a character in the tragedy the fragment came from. Blomfield took notice of the use of Sophoclean diction, highlighting the similarity to Soph. *Ai.* 1279 πηδῶντος ἄρδην Ἐκτορος τάφρων ὑπὲρ. Therefore, he naturally proposed Sophocles's play *Teucer* (fr. 576-9b R.).¹⁷⁵ Hermann was the first to posit that Aeschylus may have been the author and the play his *Women of Salamis*, but he didn't provide reasons for his thinking.¹⁷⁶ This task fell on Wecklein, who rightly pointed out that these words could not have been spoken by Teucer himself, but rather by a messenger recounting the defence of the Achaean ships, in which Teucer's arrows played a significant role (*Il.* 15.440-4). For this reason, Wecklein preferred Aeschylus's *Myrmidons* (frr. 131-42 R.), part of whose plot dealt with this episode from the *Iliad*. Therefore, he printed it as Aesch. fr. dub. 489.¹⁷⁷ Mette printed these lines as his fr. 224 (?) of this tragedy.¹⁷⁸

Both iambic trimeters lack resolutions. Trypho quoted them as an example of metalepsis, a figure of speech consisting in the substitution by metonymy of one figurative sense for another. Wecklein considered the peculiar metalepsis of φειδωλία in the sense of 'precision' rather than 'economy' to be particularly Aeschylean, but he did not provide any examples. The verb φείδομαι is used certainly in the sense of 'to use a thing sparingly' (*LSJ* s.v. II, cf. *And.* 4.32 τοὺς φειδομένους καὶ

174 Gaiser 1967, 444, Namely, Menander's *The Ephesian*. He understood the fragment to mean: "you've said a foolish thing, because I don't want to do you a purely physical favor".

175 Blomfield 1814, 48.

176 Hermann 1839, 378.

177 Wecklein 1892, 350-1, Wecklein 1893, 662.

178 Mette 1959, 78. Smyth 1957, 516 believed that the fragment alluded to *Il.* 8.266-329, which does not fit the plot of *Myrmidons*. However, this cannot be correct: the point of *Il.* 8.266-329 is that Teucer's arrows fail to kill Hector, and is then wounded in the process.

τοὺς ἀκριβῶς διατιϑόντας) in Soph. *El.* 716 φείδοντο κέντρων οὐδέν and in Eur. *Med.* 401 ἀλλ' εἶα φείδου μηδὲν ὧν ἐπίστασαι. However, these are not good parallels. Usage in this sense is usually accompanied by a negation (*LSJ* s.v. φείδομαι II 1) and does not involve metalepsis, so it does not fit the example given by Trypho. It is possible that Wecklein was right, but neither the style nor the rhythm allow us to be certain: there are seven other plays called *Achilles* by minor tragedians, as well as three called *Teucer* besides that of Sophocles.¹⁷⁹

3 Conclusions

It is time to conclude. Of the nineteen book-fragments considered, only three can be attributed to Aeschylus with any degree of certainty: these are trag. adesp. fr. 208, 291 and 391 K.-Sn. (= Aesch. fr. dub. 489a, 489b and 489d Sommerstein). There are too many uncertainties surrounding the rest, so it is better to keep those among the tragic *adespota*. Admittedly, the number of fragments by Aeschylus has increased only very modestly, but it is better than nothing.

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¹⁷⁹ Kannicht, Snell 1981, 334, 336.

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