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**A COMMENTARY ON THE FINAL
SCENE OF EURIPIDES' PHOENICIAN
WOMEN**

BY

DESPINA LIAKAKOU

**A THESIS SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS.**

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10 MAY 1994

DEDICATED TO MY SISTER

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ABSTRACT

Often enough the scholar who deals with ancient Greek poetry, specifically drama, has to answer a difficult question: whether the plays that have reached us today are in the same form as when they were written by their creator. Dramas today suffer from interpolations and corruptions and scholars have to dedicate a lot of effort to remove them.

Luckily they have plenty of “tools” they can use: syntax, grammar, metre, style, vocabulary, relevance. One, of course, must always bear in mind that all the above are not always adequate criteria. Repeated phraseology, faulty grammar, undesirable metre can, but do not always indicate whether a passage is an interpolation or not. Strange vocabulary is not enough either, since common words may survive in a limited number of plays by accident. Relevance with a passage’s environment can be a very subjective criterion as well.

This thesis is concerned with one of the most problematic, in terms of interpolation, tragedies, the “Phoenician Women” of Euripides. After a general introduction about what the tragedy is about and what the main problems in it are, chapter two deals with the final part of it (lines 1307-1767) and the textual problems it presents and at the end the final chapter tries to give us an answer to the most prominent inconsistency of the play, i.e. what does Antigone do at the end of the play: does she follow Oedipous or does she bury Polyneikes?

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CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION



1.1 DATE AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE TRAGEDY.

The “Phoenician Women” is one of the tragedies that were written by Euripides, the “τραγικώτατος τῶν ποιητῶν”. Indeed, it seems that this play has been one of the most popular tragedies, since there is evidence that it held the stage even after Euripides’ death (c.f. Haigh, 1907, page 102). During the late 2nd. century A.D. the “Phoenician Women” was included in an edition made for schoolmasters, together with “Hecabe”, “Orestes”, “Hippolytos”, “Medea”, “Alcestis”, “Andromache”, “Rhesos”, “Troïades” and “Bacchai”. This edition was used also by scholars and philologists until the latest Byzantine era. This tragedy was also included, together with “Hecuba” and “Orestes”, in another edition known as the Byzantine Triad (some scholars put this edition as early as the 5th.-6th. centuries, while others in the later Byzantine period, i.e. the 12th.-13th. centuries).

It is difficult to define the exact date of production of the “Phoenician Women”. Evidence of the style and the metre that the poet uses, plus the fact, in connection with the theme of this tragedy, which belongs to the Theban myths, that Euripides expressed a particular interest in the Theban cycle towards the final years of his career (e.g. “Bacchai”), let us place chronologically this play among his later ones. External evidence can get us closer to the production-date of the play. The scholiast in Ar.Av.424 denies that the the phrase “τό τῆδε καί τό κεῖσε” belongs to Eur.Phoen.265, basing his opinion on the fact that Euripides’

play was not produced before the “Aves” (414 B.C.). Furthermore, the scholiast on Ar.Frogs (405 B.C.) wonders why Aristophanes mentions “Andromeda” (produced in 412 B.C.) and not other fine plays more recently produced, like “Hypsipyle”, “Phoenician Women” and “Antiope”. Therefore the play must have been produced after 412 B.C. and fairly close to 405 B.C. Acceptance of the conclusion that Euripides left for Macedonia after the production of “Orestes” (408 B.C.) and that subsequently he did not contend at the Dionysia leads us to two probabilities:

either a) “Orestes” and the “Phoenician Women” belonged to the same trilogy

or b) “Phoenician Women” must have been produced after 412 B.C. but before 408 B.C.

Except for certain common thematic elements (e.g. downfall of a royal house, where the son/sons have done something wrong, the relationships between brothers and sisters under these circumstances, the lamentation of the daughter for the misfortunes of her family etc.), there is no other sufficient reason to include them in the same trilogy; and even this reason does not necessarily provide such a close connection between the plays. An analysis of the metre used in the two plays suggests that the “Phoenician Women” was written before “Orestes” (where resolutions in trimeter occur quite often). It is therefore more probable that they were produced in successive years; “Orestes” in 408 B.C. and accordingly the “Phoenician Women” in 409 B.C.

Aristophanes of Byzantium (3rd. century B.C.) seems to suggest that “Phoenician Women” belonged in the same

trilogy as “Oinomaos” and “Chrysippos”, although certain parts of his statement are not preserved thus making it difficult to understand exactly what he is saying. He also mentions that the archon then was Nausicrates, a name which is not found in the archon lists. Wilamowitz suggests that the name of the archon and the choregus have been mixed up; thus the archon might have been Glaucippus, who is mentioned in the hypothesis to Sophocles’ *Philoctetes*, the tragedy which was produced at the Dionysia of 409 B.C. and took the first place, leaving the second place to Euripides.

Both Pearson (1909) and much later Vellacott (1972) tend to connect tightly the “Phoenician Women” with the historical events before and during the period in which it was written. The play was produced four years after the Sicilian Expedition, which ended up in a complete disaster for Athens. Of course the end of the Peloponnesian War has still 5 years to come, but Athens is already a besieged city (like Thebes in the play) and the Athenian audience of the time had already recognised that any war brings more disaster than happiness. Athens had earlier suffered from repeated invasions of Attica by Sparta (Thebes in the play has suffered from the Sphinx), and for the last few years has been under constant threat from the base at Dekeleia (Thuc. 7, 27-8). One of the most important aspects of the tragedy is the exile of Polyneikes, which surely made the Athenians think of how many families suffered long and enforced exile because of the war and more specifically of Alcibiades’ exile. Maybe it is not accidental that Euripides deals with this theme just two years before he will leave

“the city of free speech” to go to the palace of king Archelaus in Macedonia, though it is not at all certain that Euripides used this trip as a form of self-exile. We should not forget also that in 411 B.C. Athens experienced a revolution, which resulted in the suspension of democracy; it is possible that this is hiding behind Eteokles’ long praise of “tyrannis” during the meeting with his brother.

Euripides’ purpose in writing this play could have been to advise the Athenian citizens to become wise and to stop a war which has brought so many misfortunes to the city and which definitely has no reason to be continued. That is why the blame in this play seems to fall on Eteokles, who is the representative of Thebes. Furthermore one cannot avoid noticing the irony in comparing Athens with one of her greatest rivals at that period, i.e. Thebes, especially in lines 852-5, where Teiresias comes to help Thebes after having made Athens victorious.

1.2 THE PLOT OF THE TRAGEDY.

As has already been mentioned, the theme of this tragedy is taken from the Theban saga. More specifically the play deals with the downfall of the house of Oedipous, a common theme among the three tragedians; Sophocles wrote three tragedies treating various aspects of the myth: “Antigone” (441 B.C.), “Oedipous the King” (probably 428 B.C.), and “Oedipous at Kolonos” (produced in 401 B.C.). Euripides wrote one more tragedy, the “Suppliant Women”

(423 B.C.) and Aeschylus the famous "Seven against Thebes" (467 B.C.) (c.f. 1.3). Of course, there is a large number of lost or fragmentary plays dealing with this theme as well: Aeschylus' "Laios", "Oedipous", and "Sphinx", Euripides' "Antigone", "Antiope", "Chrysippos", "Hypsipyle", and "Oedipous"; and Sophocles' "Eriphyle".

The prologue of this tragedy consists of two scenes. In the first one (lines 1-87) Iokaste appears on the stage. After invoking the sun she explains how Thebes was founded and she identifies herself: Kadmos came to Thebes from the Phoenician land and after marrying Harmonia, Aphrodite's daughter, he fathered Polydoros, who later on fathered Labdakos and later on from him sprung Laios, her husband. Then she explains how Laios decided to expose Oedipous on Kithairon after he was born, frightened by Apollo's oracle according to which if he ever had a male child, this son would kill him. But Oedipous was saved by Polybos and his wife without Laios knowing it. When he grew up, Oedipous met Laios in Phokis and killed him without knowing that he was his real father. Then he went to Thebes, which was suffering from the Sphinx, a monster. He solved her riddle and saved the city. As a reward he became king of Thebes and married Iokaste, without knowing that she was his mother. They had four children, Eteokles, Polyneikes, Antigone and Ismene. When the truth was realized by the family, Oedipous blinded himself and his sons imprisoned him inside the palace to "hide" the shame. Oedipous, angry, raised a curse on them that they would fight to share the kingdom. Eteokles and Polyneikes decided to rule the city

by turn to avoid the fulfilment of the curse. Eteokles ruled for one year, but when Polyneikes' turn came to rule, Eteokles refused to give him the throne. Polyneikes exiled himself to Argos, where he married Adrastos' daughter; and now he has come against Thebes with an Argive army to recover the throne. Iokaste finishes her monologue by invoking Zeus for salvation after informing us that she has persuaded Polyneikes to enter the city and try to sort the situation out peacefully with his brother.

The second scene of the prologue (lines 88-201) is called "Teichoscopia" (viewing from the walls), named after the famous scene in the Iliad, Book 3, where Helen views the Achaean troops from the Trojan wall (c.f. 1.4). Antigone accompanied by an old retainer appears on the roof of the palace. She wants to see the enemy troops, who have gathered outside the gates of the city. The seven leaders of the Argive troops are described briefly. Firstly Hippomedon, Tydeus and Parthenopaios. Then Antigone inquires about Polyneikes and the slave describes him. Finally Adrastos, Amphiaraos and Kapanews are mentioned. None of the leaders is described in great detail.

Antigone and the slave leave the scene as the Chorus enters for the Parodos of the play (lines 202-260). They identify themselves as Phoenician maidens who have left the Phoenician island to go to Apollo's temple at Delphi and become dedicated to the service of the god. On their way they decided to pass through Thebes and visit their kinsmen. Now the war holds them there and although they wish they could dance in honour of Dionysus, now they have

to experience the war, which has surrounded the city of Thebes. They express fear both for the city and for the two sons of Oedipous to whom "Ares shall bring the woe of the Furies".

It is at first sight strange that Euripides has chosen Phoenician maidens to form the Chorus of this play. They have no other connection with Thebes but their friendly feelings, expressed already in the Parodos, and their common descent with the city. They are not going to gain anything from this war by supporting either side. Thus they can be objective observers of the whole situation. This is quite different from what Aeschylus does in his play "Seven against Thebes", where the Chorus is formed by Theban women, who feel scared and panic (c.f. section 1.3) In this way Euripides succeeds in introducing a significant innovation, one which he was to use again in his "Iphigeneia at Aulis".

The first episode (lines 261-637) starts with Polyneikes entering the city following his mother's advice. He is armed with a sword because -although he trusts his mother- he is afraid of some trickery. As soon as he sees the Chorus, he inquires their identity and gives them the chance to express once more their respect for Thebes and for him as Oedipous' son. They call Iokaste, who as soon as she sees her son embraces him. In a long and emotional monody she expresses her joy at seeing him again, but also her sorrow at his exile and all the results of Oedipous' curse. She is also sad at not having been present at her son's wedding in Argos. Polyneikes reacts very emotionally at the sight of his

mother wearing the black robe and having shaved her head. He is not afraid any more and he immediately asks about the other members of his family, his father and his sisters. A stichomythia between Iokaste and Polyneikes follows during which Iokaste is informed about her son's adventures since he left: how he arrived in Argos, how he married Adrastos' daughter, how awful exile can be and how he has now decided to come against his own fatherland. Eteokles appears, also following his mother's advice, but he is not at all happy at seeing his brother. Iokaste speaks to both of them and advises them to find a compromise solution as brothers. Polyneikes expresses his point of view briefly but firmly; all he wants is his due, his share of the throne to stop the attack. Eteokles does not hear anything. For him "the greatest of gods is Monarchy" and he would do anything to keep the throne, even act unjustly, since "if one is to do wrong, then it is finest to do wrong for the sake of monarchy" (Craik's translation of lines 524-5). Iokaste speaks again, trying to make her sons think sensibly. She praises not Monarchy but Equality and Justice, which are the basic laws of nature. She tries to make them both consider what will happen to Thebes (in the case of Eteokles) or to Argos (in the case of Polyneikes) if they lose. A stichomythia (including lines 603-22 of antilabe) between the two brothers follows during which no compromise is found and even worse the brothers decide to fight against each other on the battlefield. The episode ends with Polyneikes saying farewell to his family, to his city, to the palace and to the gods of Thebes. Euripides shows that the

brothers had every chance to avoid their common death and stop the fulfilment of the curse, but in the end they will be doomed out of their own actions and choices. This scene emphasizes Eteokles as the main villain, by contrast with Aeschylus' "Septem" (c.f. section 1.3).

Facing this critical moment in the story of Thebes, the Chorus remembers the city's legendary past with which the first stasimon (lines 638-89) deals. The subject of this stasimon and generally of almost all the choral odes of the play is irrelevant to the plot, i.e. it may comment on the myth, but it adds nothing to its unfolding. This is another distinctive feature of Euripides, which can also be seen in his "Electra" and "Helen". The Chorus mentions the arrival of Kadmos in this land where Dirke flows and where Dionysus was born. There Kadmos killed with a rock the dragon, the guardian of the river, and cast his teeth to the ground; from these the earth put out an army, the first Thebans, who then fought with each other and thus died. In this stasimon the Chorus mentions for the first time the "blood with which slaughter bedewed the earth". The Chorus finishes the ode with an invocation to Epaphos, son of Io and ancestor of Kadmos, to save the city. It is not at all accidental that in this stasimon, as well as in the rest, the Chorus recalls aspects of Theban history, showing continuously that the Thebans, even from the very day they were "created", fought with each other and were destroyed (c.f. chapter three).

Eteokles wants to send a slave to fetch Kreon, Iokaste's brother, and consult him on military matters,

when he sees Kreon approaching the palace. In this way the second episode starts (lines 690-783). A long stichomythia between the well experienced Kreon and the impulsive young Eteokles, who still is interested only in his throne, follows. Kreon informs the king that the Argives are getting organized to attack the city by placing a leader guiding a detachment at each one of the seven gates of the walls, according to what a prisoner who came back from the Argives said. Eteokles suggests various formations of defence, but after Kreon's advice he agrees to place a leader with a detachment at each gate as well to face the enemy. At this point Eteokles avoids the trouble of mentioning the name of each Theban leader and maybe Euripides -through the mouth of Eteokles- is implicitly commenting on Aeschylus' "Seven against Thebes", a tragedy which is mainly based on the description of the leaders, but he is not necessarily criticizing him, since the two tragedies are based on a different plot (c.f. section 1.3). Eteokles prays that he himself may face his brother and that he may even kill him as he betrayed the city. Finally he asks Kreon to take care of his mother and see to Antigone's marriage to Haemon in the case of his death. He does not mention anything about his father, just that he has brought the folly on himself. Then Eteokles suggests the consultation of Teiresias, in case he can provide any oracle for the battle. The episode ends with his last and possibly most important order for the plot of the play, namely that Polyneikes is not to be buried inside Thebes under any circumstances, if he dies as well.

Now that everything is arranged for the coming war and there is no hope of compromise between the brothers, on the contrary there is a great probability that they are going to fight each other, the Chorus sings of the contrast between Ares, who is connected with war, chariots, horses and armies, and Dionysus, the god of wine, the flute, songs and dances. This theme has already been suggested in the first stasimon as well. This choral ode forms the second stasimon of the drama (lines 784-833). The Chorus wishes that mount Kithairon had never saved Oedipous and that the Sphinx (after solving whose riddle Oedipous became king of Thebes) had never come to Thebes, since she brought further strife among the family of Oedipous and the city. They finish by remembering the story of the dragon's teeth, from which the Thebans sprang, and Io, who bore kings for Thebes. The city is again threatened by war and slaughter, so that the Chorus, by mentioning the similar events of the past, creates a sense of historical unity.

With Teiresias' arrival the third episode begins (lines 834-1018). He is accompanied by his daughter, since he is a blind, old, weak man. Kreon asks him for his advice on what should be done for the salvation of the city. Teiresias says that the misfortunes of the city started ever since Laios fathered Oedipous and repeats in his own way the disasters in Oedipous' family. He declares that the only way that the city could have been saved would be if none of Oedipous' issue had been a citizen or a king of the city. Since this is impossible, he gives hints of an alternative solution, but he does not want to mention it. Under Kreon's pressure he says

that Menoikeus, Kreon's son, who is also present in the scene, since he was the one who went to fetch Teiresias, must be sacrificed. He is a young and genuine offspring of Kadmos (Haemon, Kreon's other son, is expected to marry Antigone, and thus is not suitable for the sacrifice), and his blood must fall in the caves from where the dragon arose. This would provide the libation of slaughter to the city and would appease Ares, who wants vengeance for the murder of the dragon¹. Of course Kreon does not accept this suggestion and he demands from Teiresias not to say a word to anybody else about it. He advises his son to go as far as possible from the city. Menoikeus pretends to accept that, but as soon as Kreon leaves the stage, he declares his decision to sacrifice himself for the sake of his city. In this way he contrasts himself to the two brothers and Euripides again shows that they have condemned themselves by their own actions.

The Chorus mentions the Sphinx again as the third stasimon begins (lines 1019-66). They describe her as a half woman and half beast, who killed the young men and gave much lamentation to the city. Oedipous destroyed her but at the same time he brought pollution and further lamentations and misfortunes to Thebes by raising curses on his sons. The ode ends with praise of Menoikeus, who willingly sacrificed himself for Thebes, and with a wish of the Chorus that they might become mothers of such brave and honourable children. The Chorus again does not forget

¹ Here again it is evident how the aspects of the history, that the chorus mentions as well in its odes, are connected with the present situation.

to mention Kadmus and the murder of the dragon which is the very beginning of the disasters of Thebes and in a way responsible for "Ares'" presence now at the walls of the city. It seems that this choral ode is based on a circular construction, where bad events (the Sphinx) are followed by good ones (Oedipous' victory), which again are followed by bad (Oedipous' misfortunes); good events are mentioned afterwards (Menoikeus' glory) and the ode ends with a reference to a bad event again (the dragon's curse).

A messenger arrives from the battlefield bringing news about the battle to Iokaste. The fourth episode begins (lines 1067-1283). First of all the messenger informs Iokaste that both her sons are alive and that the city is safe. Then he goes on to describe the warriors, basing his description on their shield-emblems in imitation of the Aeschylean scene (c.f. section 1.3 & appendix). After praising Menoikeus' sacrifice, he proceeds to describe Parthenopaios at the Neitan Gate and Amphiaraios at the Proitidan; Hippomedon attacked the Ogygian Gate and Tydeus the Homoloidan; Polyneikes was at the Krenaian Gate, Kapaneus at the Elektran and Adrastos, the king of Argos, at the Seventh Gate. A description of the course of the battle follows: the Argives were losing in the beginning, but after a boosting scream from Polyneikes and Tydeus, the "children of the Danaans" reattacked with new strength. Many of them were killed and the messenger concentrates on Parthenopaios, who was killed by Periklymenos, on Tydeus, who was checked by Eteokles himself, and on Kapaneus, who was struck by a thunderbolt from Zeus. As

soon as Adrastos saw that Zeus was against them, he withdrew his army and Thebes was saved. But after bringing all this good news, the messenger -though he tries to avoid it- informs Iokaste about her sons' decision to meet in single combat and that whoever wins will become the sovereign of Thebes. They even made a truce on these terms and also, together with the other commanders of the two armies, they made an oath to abide by it. The messenger begs Iokaste to go to the battlefield immediately and stop this in any way she can. Iokaste fetches Antigone as well and after a short antilabe between them, they depart for the battlefield.

Now it is the turn of the Chorus to lament for Iokaste, the unhappy mother, and to express their sorrow and apprehension for the course of events. This small choral ode comprises the fourth stasimon (lines 1284-1306). The bloodshed and the duel of the brothers is mentioned. The doom of death is close and they must prepare for a groaning dirge. They close the ode with a reference to the Erinyes, who through the two brothers have brought slaughter again to the city.

Immediately after the fourth stasimon the last part of the drama starts, which hereafter will be called "Exodos" (Greek word meaning exit), because it indicates the end of the tragedy, when both the Chorus and the actors will depart from the stage (lines 1307-1766). This part begins with Kreon lamenting Menoikeus' death. Two messenger speeches follow, which inform Kreon about the duel of the two brothers and the suicide of their mother after their

deaths. Antigone enters lamenting with the three corpses, and she calls Oedipous. Oedipous appears from inside the palace and Kreon states his orders: Oedipous will be exiled, Antigone will marry Haemon, Polyneikes will remain unburied as a traitor. Oedipous laments his misfortunes. A stichomythia follows between Kreon and Antigone, with Antigone declaring that she will bury her brother even if she is punished with death and threatening to kill Haemon if she is forced to marry him. Kreon is bound by his orders, which according to his own words are Eteokles' wishes in the case of his death. Antigone decides to follow her father into exile and Kreon accepts that, frightened by her threats. Oedipous tries to dissuade her, she insists, and the play ends with Antigone and Oedipous lamenting as the daughter guides her blind father's footsteps into exile. This part of the play will be dealt with much more extensively in the next chapter.

1.3 AESCHYLUS AND EURIPIDES.

About sixty years before Euripides, Aeschylus was also inspired by the same myth of the Theban cycle and he wrote his tragedy "Seven against Thebes". This was the third play of a tetralogy consisting also of two other tragedies ("Laios" and "Oedipous") and one satyric drama ("Sphinx"). Aeschylus won the first prize with this tetralogy in 467 B.C. The general theme of the trilogy was the curse on Laios and from him on the other generations of his

family, i.e. Oedipous and his sons, but since only fragments of the first two plays have been preserved for us today, it is very uncertain how they dealt with the myth.

In “Seven against Thebes” Aeschylus presents the attack of Argos against Thebes and the duel of Eteokles and Polyneikes for the throne, though in a different way from Euripides. Differences can be observed in the plot, in the choral odes and in the characterization of the dramatis personae involved.

a) The plot

Aeschylus’ play opens with Eteokles, who informs us about the attack of Argos against Thebes. He mentions that Teiresias had an oracle about the manner in which the Achaeans (the Argives are called by this name) will proceed to the attack. Eteokles has already sent a spy to the enemy’s camp to find out more, and while he is waiting for him to come back he is encouraging both the citizens and the soldiers to be calm and to protect their city (lines 1-38). The spy comes back (lines 39-77) and informs Eteokles that the Argives are driven wild and that they have decided that they will either capture the Kadmean city (this is the name used by Aeschylus for Thebes) or die. They have appointed seven leaders who by drawing lots will attack the seven gates of the Theban walls. He leaves to go back there and try to find out more about who the leaders are going to be. As soon as Eteokles hears the spy’s news he invokes Zeus and Earth and the gods of the city to protect the city. He also

mentions the curse that Oedipous laid on him and on his brother.

Now the Chorus of the tragedy, which consists of Theban women, enters the stage for the Parodos (lines 78-180). They have heard the sounds of the enemy and they are really panicking. They invoke Zeus, Athena, Poseidon, Ares, Aphrodite and Apollo to protect the Kadmean city, and they also mention the holy statues of the city.

The first episode (lines 181-285) starts with Eteokles, who has heard the cries of the maidens and is afraid that they are going to throw panic all around the city and especially into the army. A dialogue between the Chorus and Eteokles follows during which the maidens express their fears and the king attacks them rather harshly for being frightened and assures them that he himself is going to fight against the Argives. He demands from them to be brave and mainly not to interfere with "outside" matters, where the female sex can be disastrous because it is made to deal with "inside" matters only. Eteokles departs to select the warriors who will defend the seven gates.

The first stasimon (lines 287-421) is a choral ode where the maidens sing mainly of their terrors with the Argive troops being outside the walls, and at the same time describe the miseries that a conquered city suffers. They stop as they see both the spy and Eteokles returning (of course from different sides of the stage).

The spy comes back from the opponents' camp. He now knows in detail who is going to be the leader at each gate. Every time he announces the Argive leader, Eteokles

answers and announces the Theban defender and the Chorus makes a small comment afterwards. Therefore Tydeus will fight at the Proitidan Gate and he will be faced by Melanippos; Kapaneus is going to fight at the Electran Gate and he will be faced by Polyphontes; Eteoklos will attack the Neistan Gate and Megareus will stop him; Hippomedon is placed at the Oncaean Gate and Hyperbios is placed there as well on the Theban side; Parthenopaios will fight at the Northern Gate against Actor; at the Homoloidan Gate Amphiaraos, the seer, will meet Lasthenes; finally and most tragically at the Seventh Gate Polyneikes will attack, and there is no other choice than for Eteokles to face him. Eteokles sees now that the curse will be fulfilled. The Chorus tries to persuade him not to fight, but he is already resolved to undertake his duty as a leader of the city. This scene comprises the second episode (lines 422-719), the longest one of the tragedy.

The second stasimon (lines 720-91) is a lamentation of the Chorus for the mutual killing of the two brothers. They remember Apollo's oracle and how he -in this way- destroyed Oedipous' family, giving a review of the disasters of the house. They also mention the curse that Oedipous laid on his sons.

The concluding part of the play (lines 792-1078) starts with the messenger, who informs the maidens of the Chorus that the city is saved, because all the attacks at the seven gates were unsuccessful; but still Oedipous' curse is fulfilled at the Seventh gate where both the brothers killed each other. The Chorus laments the double death,

interrupting themselves briefly when they see Antigone and Ismene coming with the corpses of their brothers. The sisters' lamentation (in the form of a stichomythia) follows, until a herald enters bringing the decision of the temporary government of the city that Eteokles will be buried with every honour he deserves as a king of the Kadmeans, but Polyneikes will be thrown out unburied as an enemy. Antigone's reaction follows: she does not agree to leave her brother unburied and a stichomythia between her and the herald follows. The play ends with half of the Chorus accompanying Antigone who will bury Polyneikes and the other half following the herald's orders. It should be mentioned here that the presence of Antigone, Ismene and the herald has been questioned in terms of authenticity, and Hutchinson (1987) even deletes lines 861-74 and 1005-end.

It seems that this play has a much simpler plot than that of the "Phoenician Women". It does not start with the kind of prologue that Euripides uses, where Iokaste informs us about the whole history of Thebes and about the sequence of misfortunes that Oedipous and his family faced. This could be explained though, if we remember that the first two tragedies of the trilogy were dealing with the events of the past; we should not forget that Euripides usually presented trilogies whose tragedies did not share the same subject.

In Aeschylus' play the development of the myth (until it reaches the fulfilment of the curse) is mainly based on the detailed description of the warriors at the seven gates: every warrior is described by the emblem on his shield. In

fact, the biggest part of the tragedy (300 lines) is devoted to this description, though the actual duel of the two brothers and the battle generally is described very briefly. As the spy speaks and gradually proceeds from one gate to the next, while Eteokles places his own defendants at each gate, the agony of the audience increases, and reaches its highest point when the spy mentions Polyneikes last, at which time no other warrior is left to fight with him but Eteokles. Then they all know that the curse will be fulfilled. In Euripides' play we get no detailed description of the warriors except perhaps in the messenger's speech at lines 1104-1140 (c.f. appendix)² and in the teichoscopia (lines 88-201), whose authenticity is questioned in any case (c.f. section 1.4). In fact many scholars believe that Euripides criticizes Aeschylus for his long description in lines 751-2 of the "Phoenician Women", when Eteokles considers it a waste of time to mention the name of each warrior while the enemy

² This description in Euripides seems to be influenced by the "Seven against Thebes". One obvious similarity is the way in which Kapaneus is presented in both plays (lines 424-5 in Aeschylus and 1131 in Euripides) as threatening and insulting the city of Thebes. Of course both descriptions are based on the shields of the warriors, though both the gates and the warriors fighting at them are mentioned in a different order. Both poets avoid naming the last gate. In fact, the names of one gate and one warrior are different in the two plays: Euripides mentions the Krenaian Gate (5th.) though Aeschylus calls it Northern Gate; also in Euripides Adrastus is one of the attackers as well, but Aeschylus does not include him and mentions Eteoklos in his place. The order in which the gates and the warriors are presented in the two plays can be seen in the following columns (A for Aeschylus, E for Euripides):

A		E
Proitidan Gate-Tydeus	1	Neitan Gate-Parthenopaios
Electran Gate-Kapaneus	2	Proitidan Gate-Amphiaraos
Neitan Gate-Eteoklos	3	Ogygian Gate-Hippomedon
Onca Athena Gate-Hippomedon	4	Homoloidan Gate-Tydeus
Northern Gate-Parthenopaios	5	Krenaian Gate-Polyneikes
Homoloidan Gate-Amphiaraos	6	Electran Gate-Kapaneus
Seventh Gate-Polyneikes	7	Seventh Gate-Adrastos

is already outside the walls of the city. On the other hand Euripides describes in every detail both the battle and the duel of the two brothers through the mouth of his messenger (lines 1356-1424, 1141-98). It should be considered that the two poets use a completely different plot; while Aeschylus' tragedy is based on the description of the warriors and the audience's tension builds up as the description moves towards the seventh gate, Euripides uses a much more complicated plot, emphasizing the actual battle more than the description of the individual heroes.

Furthermore, Aeschylus does not mention anything about Teiresias' oracle that Menoikeus, Kreon's son, must die if the city is to be saved; in Euripides Menoikeus' sacrifice is used as a device to expand on the characterization of the two brothers by contrasting their selfishness to Menoikeus' self-sacrifice for his fatherland.

The concluding part in both tragedies seems to be the most ambiguous one. In the "Seven against Thebes", though we already know that Thebes is saved and that the curse on the family is realized, the entrance of the herald and his declaration about the different burial of the two brothers gives the impression that new troubles start for the city and new themes for the play. In fact, one could say that this part could very easily be the opening scene of another tragedy. Critics have long noticed this and by connecting it with the textual problems that this part represents, some of them have reached the opinion that this part is a later addition, under the influence of later plays, such as S.Ant. or Eur. Phoen., which gave prominence to Antigone's reaction

to the denial of Polyneikes' burial (c.f. Hutchinson, 1987). In the finale of the "Phoenician Women" we also see Antigone refusing to follow Kreon's (who does not appear at all in Aeschylus) orders that Polyneikes is not to be buried. But at least this theme is prepared in the previous part of the play (Antigone's introduction in the "teichoscopia", Eteokles' orders, Teiresias' prophecy). In Aeschylus it is not; nothing has previously been mentioned implicitly or explicitly about Polyneikes' burial, and even more strikingly Antigone and Ismene are introduced just before the end of the play (it is not certain that the lamentations for the brothers are sung by them and not by a divided Chorus). Of course the last part of Euripides' tragedy presents us with another problem: Antigone on the one hand promises to bury her brother and on the other she accompanies her father Oedipous (in this play he is still alive, though Aeschylus informs us in line 995 that he is already dead (c.f. Verrall, 1887, *ad loc*), and perhaps his death has been described in the preceding play of the trilogy), though she cannot accomplish both tasks (c.f. chapters two & three).

It is obvious that the Aeschylean play was written many years before the Euripidean one. Aeschylus always uses "Kadmeans" or "citizens of Kadmos" or "Kadmean army" for the Thebans; Euripides regularly uses the names "Thebes" and "Thebans" instead, maybe as a means to emphasize in the minds of the audience the implicit parallelism between Athens and Thebes and to remind them of the contemporary Thebes as well. Regarding the Argive troops, Aeschylus calls them "Achaean" as well,

though for Euripides they are always “Argive troops” or sometimes “sons of Danaus”. Both the tragedians, though, describe them as a “*λεύκασπις*” army. Generally, the absence of the “Euripidean type” prologue (reference to the previous events and to the genealogy) and the big choral odes which are fully integrated into the play (see b]) are characteristics of earlier stages in the development of tragedy. Furthermore, having a common theme for all the plays of the trilogy (which occurs in the “Seven against Thebes”) is a more Aeschylean characteristic.

The Aeschylean play leaves us with the impression that since Apollo has condemned the family (ever since Laios disobeyed his oracle and fathered Oedipous), and since Oedipous has thrown the curse on his sons, no matter what Eteokles and Polyneikes might do, they cannot avoid their future. In other words, in Aeschylus humans are regulated from a superior divine power. Whenever they do something that might provoke the gods they will be punished, no matter what their motivations or their actions are. In Euripides, though, things are different. When the two brothers meet each other before the battle, following the advice of their mother Iokaste, they have every chance to find a compromise solution and stop the realization of the curse, but both of them are too obsessed with defending what each considers his own right that they do not. Therefore in a way they are doomed out of their own actions. More generally, we can draw the conclusion that people in Euripides are presented as responsible for their own lives. In Aeschylus this sense of responsibility is

presented in a different way, i.e. all that the humans are responsible for is not to provoke the gods, otherwise they will be punished.

b) Choral Odes

In the "Seven against Thebes" the Chorus consists of Theban women. They represent the female sex of the city, the part of the city's population that will not take part in the war directly, but will be affected by the result of the war immediately. It is logical (not necessary, of course) to see the women of that period, who are expected to stay inside the house and be concerned with the inside matters, being scared and panicking. In the choral odes of the play, therefore, the Chorus invokes the protector-gods of the city and either expresses its fear for the city which is being attacked by the Argives (Parodos), or describes the bad consequences of a defeat for the city and its population (1st stasimon), or fears the possibility of the fulfilment of Oedipous' curse (2nd stasimon). In the concluding part they appear to lament for the death of the two royal brothers, something expected of females anyway. All these odes are referring to the plot of the play and are tightly connected with it. Only the last reaction of the Chorus (where half of it decides to follow the herald's orders but the other half follows Antigone to bury Polyneikes) seems to be different, and indeed this inconsistency in their behaviour is one of the reasons why the genuineness of the concluding part of the tragedy is not at all certain.

Euripides on the other hand, appears to be an innovator in this respect. First of all his Chorus consists of Phoenician maidens, who do not have any connection with the tragedy except their common origin with the Thebans. They just happen to be in Thebes and are held there because of the war. The Choral odes of his play are separate from the rest of the play, in the sense that they do not help the plot in any way. For the most part they are inspired by Theban history and refer to elements of the past, such as the birth of Dionysos in that area (Parodos), the foundation of Thebes by Kadmos (1st stasimon), the misfortunes of Oedipous (2nd stasimon), and the Sphinx (3rd stasimon). Whenever they express sorrow and lament (4th stasimon), their feelings are based just on their friendship with the Thebans and not on their immediate connection with the war. In fact, however, though the Choral odes do not help the development of the myth, they use the historical aspects that they mention to emphasize the present situation and to show that Thebes has always been suffering either from beasts or from slaughter and also that the present war can be seen as an outcome of previous historical events (e.g. the dragon).

c] Dramatis Personae

Aeschylus' play has a simpler plot than Euripides', as mentioned before, and also fewer dramatis personae are involved. This, of course, may be expected since in the period when Aeschylus wrote his tragedies only two actors were available, though later on Sophokles added a third one.

The main character is Eteokles. A spy-messenger and a herald appear as well. Antigone and Ismene turn up only in the concluding part of the play. Their presence may be spurious as has been mentioned. Polyneikes never appears directly, but is mentioned through other people's words. Oedipous and Iokaste are already dead in this play.

In the "Phoenician Women" both Iokaste and Oedipous are still alive and they appear in the play. Together with them we see Eteokles, Polyneikes, Antigone, Kreon and even Menoikeus, Kreon's son. We also see a messenger and Teiresias.

It seems that the only common personality of the royal house is Eteokles, but even so he is presented in a completely different way. In the "Seven against Thebes" he is a strong leader of his city; he cares about Thebes and he knows both what kind of military method to use for its protection and how to speak to his civilians to keep their morale high, though it must be admitted that he was too harsh on the women. He does not hesitate to sacrifice his own life for her salvation and he obeys the fate that the gods have chosen for him, even if it involves his death. In the "Phoenician Women" we meet a different Eteokles: he has consciously wronged his brother because the only god that he believes in is "tyrannis". He has every chance to compromise and avoid an unwanted war, if he follows his mother's advice during his meeting with Polyneikes, but he does not choose to do so, because he is obsessed with the idea of being a king. He does not even respect his father whom he considers mad and destroyed out of his own folly,

nor does he fear his curses. In the end he indeed makes a choice, the only one that is available to his way of thinking: instead of losing the throne, he dies. But he does not die sacrificing himself for the salvation of his city, as Menoikeus or as Aeschylus' Eteocles does, or as a victim of a curse, but out of his own actions. He is not even an experienced military leader, because as soon as the siege becomes tighter and the attack is inevitable, he seeks Kreon's advice.

1.4 INTERPOLATION

As has already been mentioned, the "Phoenician Women" was one of the most popular Euripidean tragedies. Certainly it was performed more than once. Thus one can expect to find interpolations and histrionic interferences in the text. This is expected if we also consider the way in which the text has been transmitted to us today. Each tragedy was written to be performed but once. The poet was present during the rehearsals prior to the first performance and he may have changed the text where necessary. A final copy of the play was given to the prompter (if we believe, as Page (1934) does, that one existed) and after the performance to a publisher, who dictated it to slaves so that many copies could be made simultaneously for the reading public, increasing in this way the possibility of minor errors. Copies were made also for the actors, so that they could learn their parts before the

performance. In any possible future performances, possibly down to at least 330 B.C., the original text was changed and added to by actors at their discretion, for various reasons like euphony or relevance to contemporary events and ideas (philosophy, politics, etc). These interpolations were adopted by publishers until the epoch of Aristophanes of Byzantium (c. 200 B.C.), who made the first complete and standard edition of the Euripidean plays. Didymus' edition (1st. century A.D.) followed and although it did not improve the quality of the text, it managed to save many plays. In the 2nd. century A.D. an edition of texts including commentaries was made for the use of schoolmasters and was used until the Byzantine era. The occasional interpolators imitated a general tragic manner, but not always the specific poet's style; usually they did not pay attention either to inconsistencies, and consequently the text of today's plays is littered with these. Many scholars tend to believe that this phenomenon appears in the "Phoenician Women".

There are considered to be two main interpolations in the "Phoenician Women", though there are also many lines here and there which are not believed to "fit" the Euripidean style and metre:

- a) the "Teichoscopia" (lines 88-201)
- b) the last part of the "Exodos" (lines 1582-1766).

The part of the tragedy (lines 88-201) immediately after Iokaste's monologue and just before the Chorus's entrance for the Parodos is called the "teichoscopia". In this

tragedy the scene starts with an old slave who guides Antigone with his old hand outside the women's apartments and by means of a ladder up to the terrace of the palace probably, so that she can view the Argive troops. The slave is checking the area first in case one of the citizens should see the young princess with the slave in public, which would be shameful for both of them. Antigone seems scared by the enemy, but the slave comforts her and reassures her that the city is safe. Then Antigone starts asking questions about the identity of the leaders that stand out from the troops. This dialogue (question-answer) between Antigone and the slave serves as a description of the Argive leaders as well. First of all Antigone asks about a leader who is carrying a bronze shield, and according to the slave he comes from Mykenai and is the king Hippomedon. Then Antigone sees a redoubtable leader, as big as a giant, and the slave answers that he is Tydeus and adds, after Antigone's question, that he is the one that married the sister of Polyneikes' wife. The slave also explains that he can distinguish the leaders by the emblems on their shields. The third leader about whom Antigone asks is Parthenopaios, the son of Atalanta. The slave gets the chance to admit that the Argive troops have come with justice on their side, as they support Polyneikes who has been deprived of the throne unjustly. Again, as is typical of Euripides, we see a lower-social-class person expressing moral thoughts and principles. In a really intimate way, mentioning that they were born from the same mother with lots of pains, Antigone asks about her brother Polyneikes.

The slave shows that he is standing beside Adrastos. Antigone expresses how much she misses him and wants to see him, and the slave informs her that he will be coming to the palace. Antigone, however, does not react or show her happiness at this announcement, as we would expect. Next, Antigone spots a leader in a white chariot who turns out to be Amphiaraos, the seer. Finally Antigone, who has already heard about Kapaneus who is threatening and insulting the city, asks the slave to point him out and the slave does so. The scene ends with Antigone invoking Artemis to save the city from slavery and with the slave advising the princess to return inside the palace since she has seen what she wanted to see; furthermore, he can see a company of women (the Chorus) approaching the palace. The slave comments on the main characteristic of women, according to him, i.e. gossiping. This comment gives more the impression of a comic device and seems tacked on incongruously at the end.

The main problem that the *teichoscopia* presents, apart from some lines and some expressions which are believed to be spurious, is its place. After Iokaste's speech the audience would expect to see the meeting between the two brothers, but they see Antigone instead and they hear a description of the warriors which they will hear again later from a messenger (in lines 1104-40), although that passage has been questioned as well (c.f. appendix).

The first ever scholar who draw attention to the problems of the *teichoscopia* was an ancient literary critic, though it is not clear whether he is questioning its

authenticity or just making an aesthetic comment. His comment is preserved as the third hypothesis to the play:

“Τὸ δράμα ἔστι μὲν ταῖς σκηникаῖς ὄψεσι καλόν, ἔστι δὲ καὶ
παραπληρωματικόν. ἢ τε ἀπὸ τῶν τειχέων Ἀντιγόνη
θεωροῦσα μέρος οὐκ ἔστι δράματος, καὶ ὑπόσπονδος
Πολυνείκης οὐδενός ἔνεκα παραγίγνεται, ὃ τε ἐπὶ πᾶσι
μετ’ ὀδῆς ἀδολέσχου φυγαδευόμενος Οἰδίπους προσέρραπται διὰ
κενῆς”

(Gregoire, H.& Meridier, L.: Euripide, Paris, Bude edition, page 151).

Verrall (1905) believed that Antigone’s part was not that big in the original tragedy, but was enlarged during the years under the influence of other famous tragedies. Thus he considers this scene as a later addition since it bears no connection with Iokaste’s speech and furthermore it interrupts the course of action.

Pearson (1909) on the other hand disagrees with Verrall. For him the Teichoskopia is genuine and he supports his opinion with three arguments. Firstly, Antigone’s betrothal to Haemon and her insistence on burying Polyneikes against Kreon’s order were fundamental elements in Theban history. These elements of course could have become important just under the influence of other tragedies, specifically S.Ant. But the audience would expect these events to be included in the play. Therefore this early introduction of Antigone in the tragedy is a clever device for her characterization, since now she is presented as an innocent maiden, scared by the Argive attack, but later on

she will end up being a heroine who will be willing to sacrifice her life to pay her duties to her beloved brother (if we accept the burial motif in the Exodos), for whom she shows intimate feelings even now. On the other hand, this way of characterizing Antigone may be seen as an inconsistency in her behaviour. We should not forget also that there is no reaction by Antigone to the announcement of Polyneikes' arrival, something strange. Secondly, the Theban war, together with the Trojan one, were the most important legendary wars. Though the main theme of Euripides is the double fratricide, he cannot just pass over the famous leaders. The audience during the teichoscopia, though generally familiar with the Theban myth, hear of the famous Tydeus, Kapaneus, Parthenopaios and Amphiaraos, and they experience the fears of the beleaguered city. Thus they will enjoy more the step-by-step description of the battle made later on by the messenger by being sympathetic to Thebes. On the other hand, it is the messenger's description in lines 1104-40 (which seems to be a repetition of the teichoscopia) which helps the following description of the battle (c.f. appendix). Thirdly, the composition of these lines shows basic characteristics of Euripidean style such as clearness and vigour in language and a combination of various lyric metres (though Pearson does not state any textual examples), which can also be regarded as linguistic points in favour of the authenticity of the passage.

Craik (1988) also accepts that the teichoscopia was originally written by Euripides. It is very well constructed, the scene starting and finishing with short speeches by the slave; it creates a good atmosphere for the following choral ode, conveying fear of attack and danger; the language becomes highly visual and descriptive of the surroundings and the warriors by the repetitive use of seeing verbs (*σκόπει, εἰσόρα, εἰσιδεῖν, ὄρᾳ*.....). It even contains two anachronisms, which is a main characteristic of Euripides: the slave considers the appearance of Antigone in front of any citizen a shame (lines 94-5), and this would be more appropriate in the 5th century; also in line 113 the slave makes a distinction between cavalry and infantry which belongs to the 5th century. Antigone now leaves the women's apartments just to view the enemy, but later on she will leave them again (this time with the permission and actually the request of her mother) for a different reason: she will go to the battlefield to try to stop her brothers. This makes a nice contrast.

Dihle (1981) expresses a different point of view: the teichoscopia may have been composed after the 5th century for independent production, and at some point later was incorporated into the Euripidean text. He bases his opinion both on linguistic information and on reference to the plot. For him the fact that the verb *ἐπανατέλλω* (line 105), generally an intransitive one, appears as a transitive one only here and in later epic, indicates later composition. In line 137 *ὁμόγαμος* would usually describe the relationship

between two men who share the same wife, which is not the case here, since Polyneikes and Tydeus are married to two sisters. The preposition *ἀμφί* (line 145) in association with the verb *περῶ* does not indicate where the subject is going, so that this construction cannot be considered "grammatical Greek". The adjective *καταβόστρυχος* (line 146) belongs to late erotic prose, arousing suspicion of later composition, although Euripides could have used it in the 5th century. In line 175 the adjective *λιπαρόζωνος* is a late astronomical term which could not have been used to characterize a male divinity in the 5th century. This word does not appear anywhere else in the whole corpus of tragic poetry, but it is not at all clear what Dihle actually means here. His arguments which are based on the plot are as follows: firstly, it is not logical for Antigone to go on to the next hero without any comment immediately after she has heard that her brother is coming back to the palace, as if nothing important for her is happening. Secondly, the presentation of Hecate as Leto's daughter is due to a later syncretism with Artemis (line 110). This, however, does not seem impossible here. Thirdly, from line 131 we understand that the enemy is right before the walls at the Dirke side, though from line 1100 we understand that the enemy comes from Teumessus (incompatible information). It is indeed true that the Argives seem generally to be very near the city, while later on (lines 1100ff.) they appear miles away. Finally, the sacrifices of Amphiaraos are mentioned both in the teichoscopia (line 174) and in the description of the battle by the messenger later on (line 1110); it is logically

acceptable that sacrifices should take place before battles, but their appearance in the teichoscopia is very early. On the other hand, of course, this is not particularly striking.

Burgess (1988) completely contradicted Dihle's opinion, both his "linguistic" and his "content" arguments. She believes that the use of the verb *ἐπανατέλλω* may be unusual, but it is not outrageous, though she does not specify why. I believe she is wrong here, since the verb is never found again in any of Euripides' tragedies and furthermore it does not seem to be used in the 5th century. Though *καταβόστρυχος* belongs to late erotic prose, Euripides could have used it in the 5th century, as Dihle himself admits. It should be mentioned here that this is the only time that Euripides uses this word in the whole corpus of his works, and additionally the first time we see it in the 5th century, which in fact is the main difficulty in accepting the word. To solve the problem of the adjective *λιπαρόζωνος*, Burgess is willing to adopt the change proposed by Nauck & Badham of *ἄελίου* to *ἄ Λατοῦς*, though she does not consider it necessary, since Euripides for her was capable of using the vocabulary of technical astronomy; again, however, she does not explain why. Following Eur.Or.508, the relationship that Dihle infers from *ὀμόγαμος* could be described by *ὀμόλεκτρος*, while in line 428 of the "Phoinissai" Polyneikes names himself as *σύγγαμος* of Tydeus; therefore Euripides here may be creating an alternative to *σύγγαμος* (compound adjective) by keeping the second component and changing the first into a parallel one. But the word *ὀμόγαμος* here

does not bear the same meaning as the word *σύγγαμος* in line 428; instead it appears to have the meaning that this word has in Eur.Elec.212, i.e. “husband”. The same use of the preposition *ἀμφί* is found in Aesch.Prom.830. According to Burgess Euripides here is aiming at a visual description of the Argive troops, not at a dramatic characterization of Antigone; thus it is natural for Antigone to be more keen on finding out the leaders than to express her feelings for her brother. And yet if the *teichoscopia* is not seen as a device for Antigone’s characterization, it has no purpose. It would seem completely out of place, since a description of the Argives will occur later on anyway. In Aesch.Supp.676, which is an earlier play than the “Phoenissai”, Artemis and Hecate are already associated, since Artemis there is given the epithet *ἐκάτα*. The sacrifices mentioned in the *teichoscopia* could be trappings of divination or possible deaths of Thebans for Burgess. The word bears this meaning in Eur.Hec.135. The only *σφάγια* that the seer Amphiaraos would make would be to foresee the fortune of the battle. According to Aeschylus’ tradition, these sacrifices showed that the battle would be unsuccessful for the Argives and that is why Amphiaraos in the “Seven against Thebes” is presented as going to the battle knowing his unlucky fate, but unable to avoid it. Therefore the reference to the sacrifices here is not necessarily out of place. Definitely these sacrifices cannot mean deaths of the Thebans since the battle has not even started yet. The different direction of the enemy in the two lines cited by Dihle could be explained through the different purpose of the two

passages, i.e. in the *teichoscopia* the troops are described according to a panoramic view, while in the messenger speech we get a complete description. Generally Burgess believes that lines 88-201 are a genuine passage. Its place is a result of Euripides' tendency throughout his career to make his prologues appear separated from the rest of the play, or to create double prologue scenes and to leave the stage empty after the prologue and before the second scene. He adopted this technique mostly when the person uttering the prologue was an immortal, who would in any case normally leave the stage after the prologue not to appear again. This occurs in "Hippolytos", "Hecuba", and "Ion". Here though, the prologue is uttered by a mortal, not an immortal person, but exactly the same phenomenon is found in "Iphigeneia in Tauris".

It is true that the *teichoscopia* presents the critic with enough textual problems that would allow him/her to consider it spurious. In addition, it seems out of place, because after Iokaste's prologue the audience would be anxious to see the meeting of Eteokles with Polyneikes and certainly not a dialogue between Antigone and a slave having as its theme a description which will be repeated later on by a messenger. The *teichoscopia* could perhaps be accepted as Euripidean if considered as a clever way of introducing Antigone early enough in the play to make the development of her character to the heroine of the finale obvious for the audience by contrast (a simple and innocent maiden in the beginning but a moral and heroic woman in

the end). Seen in this light the passage would not necessarily give the impression of an irrelevant addition, because it could be seen as integrated into the plot of the drama as it would advance the characterization of the *dramatis personae*. Nevertheless it is very strange to see Euripides dedicating a whole passage of 113 lines to the characterization of a person who will only appear again at the end of the play. Thus it is not at all certain that this reason is an adequate guarantee of the genuineness of the passage, especially as it is strongly based on the assumption that Antigone does play an important role at the end of the play, something not safely true, since the authenticity of that part has also been questioned. But the problems of the concluding part of the tragedy will be dealt with in more detail in the following chapters.

CHAPTER TWO

THE EXODOS

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The Exodos (lines 1307-1766) of the “Phoenician Women” takes place immediately after the fourth stasimon (lines 1285-1306). The fourth stasimon is an ode closely tied to the dramatic context of this tragedy, where the Chorus laments the now inevitable double fratricide. This stasimon carries the audience to a different atmosphere, full of sadness (using words expressing grief and describing the fighting brothers as beasts) after the realization of Menoikeus’ sacrifice; under the circumstances this sacrifice appears so realistic, since it is needed for the salvation of the city (according to Teiresias’ predictions) and is only motivated by this reason, in contrast with the death of the two royal brothers, who will die only because of their personal ambitions and interests. This very emotional dirge resembles the parodos of the play (lines 202-60), where the Chorus explains how it came to the land of Kadmos and then describes its fear for the war between the two brothers. This previous fear has now become the reality: the two brothers are indeed going to fight with each other. Thus the first and the last ode of the Chorus in this play include the same theme, an element of consistency in the tragedy. The following Exodos is the part that closes the play and in fact informs the audience about the future fortunes of the dramatis personae involved. Thus this is the most important part of the tragedy, since the development of the myth reaches its “crescendo”.

The Exodos starts with the arrival of Kreon. He seems to be completely frustrated and weak, a different person from the strong and clever leader we met in his stichomythia with Eteokles, when he was giving him advice for the coming battle (lines 697ff). He does not yet know about the duel of his two nephews and of the departure and death of his sister. A messenger arrives (line 1335), by whose appearance Kreon understands that the news he is going to hear is bad. The messenger gives a long speech, which is separated into two parts by a brief comment made by the Chorus (lines 1425-6). The first part (lines 1356-424) describes the duel of the two brothers, while the second (lines 1427-79) deals with the deaths of Eteokles, Polyneikes and Iokaste. Strangely, although the speech is addressed to Kreon, he remains silent between lines 1356 and 1584 although he still is present (c.f. section 2.5).

Antigone enters the scene now (line 1485), bringing the dead bodies of her mother and her brothers. She laments for the misfortunes of her family, starting from the very beginning: the day that Oedipous solved the Sphinx's riddle.¹ She considers the Erinyes to be responsible for the death of her brothers. Antigone is changed from the young and innocent virgin of the teichoscopia (lines 88-201), if we accept its authenticity. She is grown-up now, wrecked by the misfortunes that surround her, but ready to face her responsibilities as we shall see later. Her dirge here is

¹This theme is mentioned by different characters in different parts of the play, guaranteeing in a way its unity. Beasts also appear continuously in this tragedy either literally mentioned or metaphorically used to create Homeric similes (c.f. chapter three).

similar to Iokaste's monody greeting Polyneikes at the beginning of the play (lines 301-53) (c.f. section 2.4). The way they are dressed is similar. They both mourn and feel grief, Iokaste then for the coming battle, Antigone now for the double death which is real. The themes they both use in their monologues are parallel too. Iokaste's monody is addressed to Polyneikes and in Antigone's dirge there is a special reference to Polyneikes (line 1494). All these similarities show consistency in style and in content in this play.² Finally Antigone calls her father from inside the palace.

Oedipous appears (line 1539). He is holding a stick and he describes himself as a spectral character (using a common metaphor for old people [c.f. section 2.4]) now that he is coming back to the light after such a long time in the dark. This antithesis between light and darkness - usually connected with Oedipous' situation - comes up constantly in different parts of the play (again an element of unity [c.f. chapter three]). Oedipous talks with his daughter and he is informed about the death of his wife and sons.

Kreon speaks again (lines 1584-94), and as the new ruler of the city he orders the exile of Oedipous (which appears to be consistent with Teiresias' predictions³) and the marriage of Antigone with Haemon (as Eteokles wished). Oedipous laments the new misfortunes (lines 1595-1624).

²Maybe Euripides is implying that Polyneikes had right on his side. For Iokaste he is the son she has not seen, and Antigone expresses her intimate feelings for him in the teichoscopia, though her love does not prevent her from realizing his eris in lines 1494-7.

³This is a crucial point for the problem of interpolation and inconsistency in the Exodos. In actual fact, Kreon "modifies" Teiresias' words for his own interests (c.f. section 2.5).

He recalls his previous life and how he was destroyed from the moment of his birth. Finally he tries to persuade Kreon not to send him to exile. Kreon remains unmoved (lines 1625-38), and now announces also his decision to leave Polyneikes' corpse unburied (again according to Eteokles' last wishes⁴). A stichomythia between him and Antigone follows (lines 1646-82). Antigone tries to persuade Kreon to change his mind and to let her bury Polyneikes. Her last desperate attempt to achieve her goal consists of her threat to kill Haemon on their wedding night. Kreon refuses to let her bury her brother and for fear that she might carry out her threat he lets her accompany her father to exile. Oedipous starts talking with Antigone (lines 1682-763). He is trying to discourage her from following him. His opinion is that Antigone should go on living her life happily. But she stays firm to her decision. They both lament for their misfortunes and the drama ends with the daughter guiding the blind steps of her father and with a final comment by the Chorus (lines 1764-7). This last part of the finale (mainly lines 1582-1767) is probably the most problematic one in terms of consistency and interpolation.

2.2 PREVIOUS CRITICISM

It seems that the Exodos of the "Phoenician Women" presents many problems for the scholars. Apart from

⁴But again Kreon appears to change Eteokles' decisions for his own interests (c.f. section 2.5).

various textual or metrical inconsistencies here and there (c.f. commentary), the difficulty is to answer the question how can Antigone both bury Polyneikes and follow her father into exile. These two contradictory acts create the impression that the tragedy ends with two different finales. Therefore, it is possible that certain parts of the Exodos are the result of interpolation. Many different opinions have been expressed by critics, who have tried to solve the problem of inconsistency and interpolation in this final part of the tragedy.

Conacher (1967) believes that the fact that many elements of the myth of this tragedy appeared in other tragedies as well made it vulnerable to change in later presentations: thus the finale, as it stands now, may possibly belong to a later 4th. century stage version. In his article he makes it clear from the very beginning that he will not deal with the separate problems that the text presents, but just with the inconsistency between the two main themes mentioned above, i.e. the "burial motif" (= Antigone buries Polyneikes) and the "exile motif" (= Antigone follows Oedipous to exile). He believes that the original finale consisted of Oedipous and Antigone lamenting and departing for exile, but he does not treat as an interpolation every reference to the burial motif, which was a very well-known aspect of the myth which the audience expected to appear in some way in the tragedy. That is why this theme has been prepared in previous parts of the play, i.e. in the "teichoscopia" (lines 154-69), where Antigone expresses her intimate feelings for her brother, and in lines

774-7, where Eteokles orders that Polyneikes should not be buried in Thebes like a traitor. But still this motif remains a more traditional and theatrical element and not a finale for Conacher. The way in which he supports his opinion and solves the problems of accepting the exile motif is as follows. Kreon's order for the exile of Oedipous (lines 1590-1), which (according to Kreon) is based on Teiresias' advice (lines 886-8), is an inconsistency for many scholars, since Teiresias did not advise exactly that. For Conacher, Teiresias then was talking about a past and neglected obligation to exile the whole generation of Oedipous; but in the Exodos Oedipous is presented as the cause of all disasters for Thebes, and Kreon insists on his exile on these grounds, because everything that has happened is focused on him. In addition, Conacher believes that this inconsistency is intentional by the poet as part of Kreon's characterization, by which he is presented as a selfish leader who only cares about his own interest. The changes of Antigone's decision from burying her brother to just washing his body or even taking care of his wounds, which take place in lines 1667-71 (though not even these are permitted by Kreon), point to the exile motif as well. Antigone has already decided to accompany her father and that is why she modifies her decision. Of course Euripides does not want to present Antigone abandoning one family duty for another. Thus to cover her loss of face about the burial he uses a clever invention, namely the breaking of her engagement with Haemon. Her violent refusal to marry him (line 1673), since he is Kreon's son, compensates for her abandoning of the

burial (Conacher does not clarify in what sense he perceives this compensation), and at the same time frees her to follow Oedipous. The only remaining problem is that Antigone repeats her decision to bury her brother (lines 1743-6). Conacher treats these lines as part of a larger fragment of the tragedy (lines 1737-end) which he believes to be spurious for many reasons: lines 1758-end are a clear imitation of S.OT.1524-5; and Oedipous' suggestions to Antigone (lines 1740-6), unless customary in such departures, break the logical sequence between lines 1737-9 (where Antigone laments at deserting her friends) and line 1747 (where Oedipous asks her to go and visit them).

Friedrich (1939) shares the same opinion as Conacher, but he supports his point of view in a different way. He too believes that the original finale consisted of the exile motif. Oedipous' role was bigger than it appears to be now, and it included elements of the king's suffering and probably the prophecy of Apollo about him; but through the years Antigone's role, which in the beginning was just a lyrical one, was enlarged to include heroic elements at the expense of Oedipous' role. Thus Friedrich excludes all passages that refer to Antigone, and he even argues that earlier elements in the tragedy point to the exile and not to the burial motif. Under this point of view, Antigone's feelings about Polyneikes in the "teichoscopia" (lines 154-69) are seen as part of Polyneikes' and not Antigone's characterization. Eteokles' orders (lines 774-7) are removed by a quite radical argument: Eteokles deals with Polyneikes' burial near the end of his speech, after he has finished his

treatment of family affairs and even after he has made his final order to send for Teiresias. Therefore this is a later addition to the text. Against this Conacher (1967) believes that under the circumstances Polyneikes' burial ends up as a public and political matter and not a family one; furthermore, his order concerning Teiresias refers to immediate things that are to be done and not to future ones. Finally, Friedrich suggests that the way in which the messenger presents the death of the two brothers (lines 1438-54) contradicts the hatred conveyed in Kreon's burial interdict (though this hatred is part of his characterization in this play); but surely only Polyneikes is presented by the messenger as having changed his point of view, while Eteokles dies without changing his orders. Friedrich's opinion seems to be based on subjective assumptions about what the Exodos originally included.

Meridier (1950) and Kitto (1939) express the opposite point of view and support the authenticity of the burial motif. Meridier (1950) believes that the original finale of the tragedy consisted of the burial motif, since it is the one most well-prepared in the previous parts of the tragedy and specifically in the "teichoscopia" (lines 154-69) and in Eteokles' orders to Kreon (lines 774-7). His basic argument refers to the inconsistency between Kreon's orders (lines 1590-1) and Teiresias' remarks (lines 886-8), for which he cannot find any possible explanation as Conacher does.

Kitto (1939) adopts the burial motif as the genuine one for the Exodos, but he does not completely reject the exile motif either. He characterizes the tragedy as a

“chronicle play” on the house of Kadmos. Thus the most melodramatic finale would be Oedipous’ exile, the blind king after the death of his sons departing for exile; but for Kitto he is not accompanied by Antigone, who remains in Thebes for as long as it takes to bury her brother and will join her father later on. Today’s ending is the work of an interpolator, who wanted to match this play with Sophocles’ “Oedipous Koloneus”, although in that play Oedipous dies just before the war. Oedipous’ departure is necessary for the play and that is why Euripides kept him alive in Thebes against the tradition; but the sight of him leaving alone would make the finale of the play even more pathetic. Kitto bases his whole research (with reference both to the content and to the style of the text) on the above assumption, but he ends up making extreme textual rearrangements and imagining lost lines to support his assumption. He nowhere gives sufficient reasons to delete or accept a passage, but its consistency or inconsistency with the finale that he prefers is a substantial reason for him. Thus everything indicating Antigone’s immediate departure is considered to be spurious. Following this path, he accepts lines 1747-57 (which are doubted by almost all scholars), because they belong to Euripides stylistically, but they were written for a different context (though he does not know what that context might be). They clearly show that Antigone is going to stay longer in Thebes to bury her brother against Kreon’s orders and in fact Oedipous encourages her to do so. Kreon’s exit is spurious and was invented by the interpolator to fit his new ending. Down to line 1663 the text seems to be

acceptable stylistically. The plot that according to Kitto is implied is as follows: Antigone would only be able to bury Polyneikes by stealth, if Kreon knew of her intentions, and so she pretends to come to her senses and agrees to marry Haemon, but as soon as Kreon leaves she declares her true intentions. Lines 1683-92 indicate the finale Kitto accepts, and so they are accepted. Following this way of analyzing the text, lines 1703-22 are also condemned, though Kitto does not give any good reason; for him it just seems better to do so, since they do not accord with the finale he accepts as genuine. Regarding the rest of the Exodos, lines 1595-1614 (the first part of Oedipous' speech) are a repetition of the story, and so they are not accepted; lines 1615-24 may be spurious, as it is not logical for the interpolator to have rewritten only the first part of the speech and not the second; lines 1639-45 raise some stylistic objections, and certainly the two last lines of Antigone's speech (lines 1644-5) are awkward, but can be explained under the assumption that her speech has been cut; and finally the two speeches made by Kreon (lines 1584-94 and 1625-38) are generally accepted, except for the four last lines (1635-8), which indicate a quick marriage of Haemon and Antigone and must have been added by the interpolator to make Antigone's decision to follow her father more difficult to fulfil, since Kitto does not believe in Antigone's immediate departure.

Valk (1985) could be called, together with Meredith (1937), a compromising scholar. He believes that Antigone followed her father into exile and that she would bury

Polyneikes at some point in the future. He does not regard Kreon's orders as inconsistent with Eteokles' decision (in respect of Antigone's dowry) or with Teiresias' remarks (concerning Oedipous' exile). Valk accepts the possibility that the dowry was arranged in the past, at a time not mentioned in the play, or that what Kreon actually means is that Eteokles gave him the throne. As for Teiresias' remarks, he said that the whole family should have been exiled, and this definitely included Oedipous; all that Kreon does is that he focuses his decision on Oedipous, since he is the head of the family and Thebes' disasters appear to be caused by him in the Exodos. It must be noted here that Valk's argument appears to be too dismissive of the actual difficulties of the Exodos.

Meredith (1937) seems to be the only scholar so far who believes in and supports the authenticity of the whole Exodos. He believes that Antigone will not leave the body of Polyneikes behind unburied and just depart with her father for exile; that is why she repeats her decision in line 1745. Against this it should be noted that what Antigone actually says in line 1745 is that she will bury her brother secretly. Antigone will definitely leave with Oedipous, but she will take the body with her to bury it outside Thebes. The textual evidence that he uses to support his point of view is the verb *οἴχεται* in line 1744, which for him indicates that the bodies have been removed, although in actual fact the verb could just refer to Polyneikes' death. Probably the corpses of Eteokles and Iokaste, as they are going to be buried honourably, have already been removed before, and

line 1744 indicates the removal of the corpse of Polyneikes. Besides, Kreon himself has already ordered the removal of the corpses (line 1627) and though his order was not carried out immediately, it would have been at some point later, probably at line 1702; surely they would be removed together. Certainly the play could not have closed with the three corpses on stage. Meredith explains the inconsistencies in the Exodos as follows: Kreon's orders for the imprisonment of Antigone are never carried out because the whole stichomythia between him and Antigone (lines 1645-82) is used for Antigone's characterization; it is meant to show Antigone's change from the innocent maiden of the "teichoscopia" to the heroine of the finale. Under this view, Kreon's failure to carry out his orders emphasizes Antigone's strength. In fact, the whole way in which Kreon leaves the stage is weak, but adds strength and importance to Antigone. Euripides wants to present Kreon, on the other hand, not just as weak but also as egotistical: the inconsistency between his orders and the orders that Eteokles gave to him, as well as his handling of Teiresias' remarks, is meant to show that all Kreon cares about is his self-interest; he is not lying, but just pressing the truth for his own advantage. Since the audience knows from the beginning of the play that Oedipous is alive and kept inside the palace, he must appear on stage. His first speech (lines 1595-1624) is not at all out of place. The repetition of the story of his misfortunes is actually addressed to Antigone, so that she can make her decision to accompany him. Oedipous has been "imprisoned" inside the palace by his

sons for several years; therefore, it is natural for him to be eager to speak, and of course all he wants to talk about is his troubles. Facing exile, his last downfall, he is not stable any more. He is wandering when he advises Antigone to visit her friends and to carry out her religious duties (lines 1747-57). And at the end, just before departing, he feels a king more than ever before and that is why he addresses the citizens of Thebes, his citizens. Meredith's opinion seems to lack objectivity; all his arguments are based on what he believes Euripides wanted to show to the audience in terms of the characterization of *dramatis personae*. Furthermore he ignores the real difficulties of the text.

Reeve (1972) dedicated his second article on interpolation in Greek tragedy to the "Phoenissae" and more specifically to the "fight" between two other scholars who expressed their opinions on the problems of this tragedy, i.e. Erbse (1966) and Fraenkel (1963). After referring to their opposing answers on specific textual problems (c.f. sections 2.3, 2.5), he gives each one's answer on the main inconsistency of the Exodos mentioned before. For Erbse this is not an inconsistency at all, since the tragedy was written by Euripides and Euripides, genius as he was, would never have left such an inconsistency in his text. Thus this is an excellent dramatic device! Fraenkel tends to believe that the burial motif is not the original one, but was superimposed on the original text by an interpolator under the influence of S.Ant.. Explaining this big discrepancy between the above scholars (but mostly supporting Fraenkel), Reeve reaches a more general conclusion about interpolations in tragedy, i.e.

that often bad arguments are used for defending spurious lines, and that one should not think that deletion in principle is something disreputable; all research, of course, depends on the nature of each scholar.

Trying to analyze the Exodos⁵, Craik (1988) separates it into three parts: a) lines 1307-1479, b) lines 1480-1581, and c) lines 1582-1766. The first part contains the long messenger's speech; the second Antigone's dirge and her first dialogue with Oedipous; the last Kreon's orders, his stichomythia with Antigone, a second stichomythia between Antigone and Oedipous, and their final departures. These three parts of the play are clearly separated by a brief song of the Chorus (lines 1480-4 and 1582-3). Furthermore each part seems to be treating a different sub-aspect of the finale: the first one the informing of Kreon (and of the audience) of the course of events, the second Antigone's arrival and the informing of Oedipous; and the last the reactions of the characters involved to the new events. This seems a useful method of analysis and we are going to follow it in this thesis.

2.3 LINES 1307-1479

The Chorus announces that Kreon is approaching the stage. Scholars, based on line 1316 where Kreon says that

⁵ Craik does indeed present a full commentary, a translation and an edition of the text of the tragedy and she treats various textual problems, but she avoids giving an answer on the main inconsistency of the Exodos.

he brought the corpse of his dead son, tend to believe that he is carrying the body in his hands as he comes to the stage. Strangely enough, the Chorus does not mention anything of the kind. Of course the presence of the corpse on the stage, seen by the audience, would have a great dramatic impact, but it would also complicate the plot, since as we see later on the other three corpses will be brought on the stage also. Perhaps Kreon brought the corpse from the dragon cliffs somewhere inside the palace, but not to the stage. Kreon is completely wrecked. He does not yet know of the duel of the two brothers or of its result and the death of his sister and he expects Iokaste to pay the appropriate attention to the body, ironically enough since Iokaste, even if she were alive, would have to take care of her two dead sons (lines 1307-21, esp. 1318-9). A messenger arrives, and by his gloomy appearance Kreon understands that the news is going to be bad (line 1335). He informs Kreon about the deaths of Polyneikes, Eteokles and Iokaste. The messenger gives two long speeches, which are separated by a brief comment of the Chorus (lines 1425-6). The first one (lines 1356-1424) describes the battle of the two brothers and their wounds. It is characterized by a very careful balance between the two brothers: first Polyneikes' invocation to Hera (lines 1365-71), then Eteokles' invocation to Athena (lines 1372-6), then Eteokles' and Polyneikes' strikes by turn (lines 1390-1424). The second speech (lines 1427-79) describes the death of the brothers and of Iokaste. Again the balance in the description is obvious: first Eteokles' death and his silent farewell to his mother (lines 1438-41),

then Polyneikes' last words to his mother (lines 1444-53). Iokaste's suicide beside her two sons follows (lines 1455-9), "closing the cycle" of the main part of the speech, which started with her lament for the impending death of her sons. As is typical of messenger speeches, this one also imitates epic in style and narration. Apart from the sense of balance, the messenger describes the acts in chronological order using verbs expressing action to make the narration more vivid. The invocations to the gods is another epic characteristic. The messenger describes the fighting brothers in a simile (line 1380) as fighting beasts. He uses many relatives (lines 1363, 1376, 1377-8), and he repeats the same words again and again (especially those expressing victory or war or killing or weapons or blood, like *κτανεῖν*, *καθαιματῶσαι*, *νικηφόρον*, *καλλίνικον*, *φοίνιου μάχης*, *λόγχαις*, *σίδηρος*, and *ξίφος*) to make the narration more vivid.

1310: Kreon is not the secure leader any more, but a wrecked father. The first half of the line is used also by Eteocles (lines 734, 740), where he seeks advice from Kreon to save the city. Euripides intentionally makes this repetition to emphasize the change in Kreon in the course of the play: once he was able to give advice, now he himself needs support and help and even worse he does not know from whom to ask it. The same phrase is used by Polyneikes in Sophocles' "Oedipous at Colonus" (line 1254), when he is faced by a disaster that he can neither accept, nor change. It seems that this phrase is often used in tragedies to show the desperation of the character who utters it.

1311: Erbse (1966) explains that Kreon here “sees” a cloud surrounding the city, though he should believe that the city has been saved, since Menoikeus’ sacrifice was aimed at this salvation and nobody questioned that. Kreon is still frustrated by the death of his son, and furthermore he does not yet know of the battle and its result, and that is why for him there is still a cloud above the city.

1312: Some scholars consider this line spurious because of its appearance in different forms in different MSS. (*τοσοῦτον* instead of *τοιοῦτον*, *ἰέναι* instead of *ἰέναι*); we cannot delete it though, because it is explaining what kind of cloud Kreon is talking about.

1314: the *ι* in *ἀνιαρός* is short here, as it sometimes is in Homer also.

1317: the verb *βοάω-ᾶ* is usually used for human beings. This line can be interpreted in one of two ways:

a) as a personification of the house. The house of Oedipous is being destroyed and it shouts in despair.

b) as a synekdoche of the house. It is the people inside the house who are shouting. Then it is more probable that Menoikeus’ corpse is inside the house; interpreting the line in this way helps us avoid the possible complication in the plot of the play if four corpses are found on the stage (c.f. introduction).

1318-9: these two lines are highly ironical. Iokaste should be alive to take care of and bury the corpses of her own children, but she is not. Even if she were alive, she would be concerned about her dead sons and not about her nephew as Kreon expects her to be. Furthermore, Kreon does not

know of the death of his sister and his nephews, though the audience does. In a way these two lines prepare the audience to hear the messenger's speech. In addition it is strange to see Kreon here considering the burial of his son so important, though later on he will refuse Polyneikes' burial. In line 1318 *γέρων* separates the preposition *μέτα* from its case (*ἀδελφήν γραῖαν*), emphasizing *γραῖαν* in the same way as happens in Eur.Bac.193 (*γέρων γέροντα παιδαγωγῆσω σ' ἐγώ*). Furthermore line 1319 resembles Eur.Hec.613 (*λούσω προθῶμαι τ'*).

1320-1: *Χθόνιος θεός* is certainly Hades. Again it is strange to hear this "saw", which describes a custom and a serious obligation to the dead in Ancient Greece, being said by Kreon (c.f. lines 1318-9). Kreon will later on deny burial to Polyneikes and perhaps what Euripides is trying to do here is to balance his later decision; alternatively, under the assumption that the burial motif is interpolated, he may be teasing the audience; or the passage may be seen as a part of Kreon's characterization: he is really keen to bury and honour his own son, but later on he will not care if he leaves Polyneikes dishonoured.

1327: *ἀγαπάζων* is an epic form of the verb *ἀγαπάω-ῶ*. The verb is found with the same meaning (while bestowing care upon), but in its regular form, at Eur.Supp.764 (*ὅτ' ἠγάπα νεκρούς*).

1332: *μέν* here is not followed by *δέ* as is usual. There is nevertheless an implied link between the messenger's appearance and his words and it can be explained if we give to *μέν* the meaning of "at least". Denniston (1954)

characterizes this use as *μὲν* solitarium and some of the examples he cites are S.Tr.350 and Eur.El.575.

1339: *ἐν φαεί* The light here represents the world of the living in contrast with the dark world of the dead. This contrast between light and dark is a common motif in this play, being used as an element of unity. It occurs several times, especially in the Exodos, for example during the lament of Antigone and Oedipous, and also with reference to Oedipous' blindness (c.f. chapter three).

1342-3: it is probable that these two lines are spoken by the Chorus and not by Kreon. He has already expressed his first reaction and surprise at the news in the preceding lines. If they are uttered by Kreon, line 1342 should be treated as an interpolation. It is expected of the Chorus to make such an invocation to Oedipous' palace, since they are foreigners (but friends) who found a friendly shelter in this house and whose only connection with the family is pure sympathy. Of course if they are uttered by the Chorus, then line 1344 could not have been uttered by the Chorus as well. A plausible solution is that Kreon answers in line 1344, while lines 1345 and 1346 are uttered by the Chorus and Kreon respectively. Thus:

lines 1342-3 = Chorus

line 1344 = Kreon

line 1345 = Chorus

line 1346 = Kreon

1345: *βαρυνποτωτάτας* is a compound epithet (*βαρύν-* *πότωτος*). It is one of the first times that this word is used to express a great disaster.

1350-1: this is a typical gesture of mourning in Greek Tragedy. The reading that the MSS give us has the word *χεροῖν* after the word *κτύπους*, but since the metre appears to be two dochmiac dimeters this creates a problem. Hermann to restore the metre placed the word *χεροῖν* at the end of line 1350, a rather awkward place. An alternative that would solve the problem would be to omit the word *χεροῖν* and rewrite line 1350 as “ *ἀνάγεται ἀνάγεται ὄ κωκυτόν γοερόν* “.

1353: Kreon here mentions the Sphinx, a theme that recurs several times in this play (c.f. chapter three).

1354: Euripides uses *διπτύχων* instead of *δυοῖν*. Generally Euripides is fond of words expressing duality, and especially in this play duality is one of the main motifs (c.f. lines 1349, 1362, 1526). Some scholars prefer *καί πᾶς* instead of *πᾶς καί*, but *καί* here is used to express the meaning of “actually” and the desire to be informed.

1358: this line has been deleted by Wecklein. “*Ὡστ ’ οὐχ* is not found at the beginning of a verse in tragedy and the two negatives contained in the sentence make the interpretation awkward. Goodwin (1929) accepts this passage, characterizing it as *ὥστ ’ οὐ* followed by an infinitive, and giving parallel examples as well (e.g. Eur.Hel.107). He even suggests that in this case the expression could be replaced by the corresponding finite verb. He believes that the expression resulted from a mixture of two constructions, i.e. *ὥστε μή εἶναι* and *ὥστε οὐκ ἐστίν*.

1360: the line is repeated from line 1243, but it is not an awkward line and appears naturally in Oedipodean tragedies.

1362: this line has been deleted by Valckenaer. It is repetitive of course, but one should always keep in mind Euripides fondness for duality. There is no problem with the metre and it does not seem out of place, since it makes a good contrast with *μονομάχον* in the next line: two brothers in one duel.

1369: *αἴσχιστον στέφανον* is an oxymoron. The particle *αἰτῶν* is preferable to the indicative *αἰτῶ*. The line is not spoken by Polyneikes, since it would be illogical for him to invoke a god for victory and then describe the glory as full of shame, but by the messenger. Euripides likes to present socially low characters expressing high moral principles. For example the slave earlier on in this tragedy in the “teichoscopia” expresses his opinion about justice and who is right in this war. It is an Homeric characteristic for messengers to moralize during their speeches.

1376: this line is repeated from line 756, creating suspicions of interpolation.

1377-8: *τυρσηνική σάλπιξ* was a musical instrument used in ancient times to indicate the beginning of a battle. The scholiast, probably guessing, says that it was not used in Eteokles’ time, but a torch was used instead, which would make the reference to the trumpet here an anachronism. But Homer introduced the trumpet in his poetry, and perhaps Euripides borrowed it from him. Craik (1988) suggests an appealing alternative solution: she puts the

phrase *πυρσός ὥς* between commas and translates the line, “when, clear as torchlight, was given the Etruscan trumpet’s blare...”, though she presents this interpretation only in her commentary.

1380: The simile in the messenger’s speech is another loan from epic. Here the fighting brothers resemble fighting beasts. The same simile is found in *ILIAD*. N.471, where Idomeneus stands firm like a boar in the mountains and terror does not seige him.

1388-9: these lines have been needlessly deleted by Wecklein. There is nothing wrong with them metrically. The messenger in other parts of his speech mentions the reaction of the troops (lines 1395, 1460-4), and it is typical of messengers to repeat words and phrases in their speeches. Euripides uses this expression to show how tense and dramatic the atmosphere in the two camps was, and in fact the repeated ρ and σ which we find in these lines emphasize this dramatic effect. It must be noted here that the sound of the lines, precisely because of this repetition, would be awful (*ὀρῶσιν-ιδρώς-δρῶσι-ὄρρωδίαν*). *Ὀρρωδίαν* means “fear”; it is usually used in war situations (Herod.8.70, Thouk.2.89, Eur.Med.317).

1401: *μάρμαρον πέτρον* is a loan from Homer: a *μάρμαρον πέτρον* is used by Patroclus while fighting with Hector in *ILIAD*. Π.734-5.

1407: *Θεσσαλόν σόφισμα* is literally a specific feint in wrestling. Euripides (and the scholiast) mentions that Eteokles became acquainted with it while visiting Thessaly. The Thessalians were very famous for their trickery and

deception in antiquity. Therefore here we can see two different ideas presented simultaneously:

a] Euripides simply describes the movement that Eteokles made.

b] Euripides is implying that Eteokles used an unfair trick to win, and in fact this trick is explained by the sentence beginning *ἐξαλλαγείς* in line 1409. This is part of Eteokles' characterization, since he is supposed to be the "bad brother" who would do anything to keep the leadership and the power (c.f. lines 499-525). Of course both interpretations are possible and it seems that they are combined in this phrase.

1413: *ἐνήρμοσεν* is a favourite Euripidean verb, meaning "push inside". It is also found at Heracles 179 (*πλευροῖς πτήν ἔναρμόσας βέλη*). Statistics show that the verb is not used by the other tragedians at all.

1418: if we adopt *αὐτόν*, the meaning is that Eteokles was not paying attention to himself and was not protecting himself. If we adopt *αὐτόν*, the meaning is that Eteokles did not pay attention to what Polyneikes was doing. Therefore *αὐτόν* is preferable, since we are told that Eteokles was plundering Polyneikes.

1421: *ἦπαρ* is another Homeric word (ILIAD. Y.469). It is a very common place to wound during a duel, but metaphorically it is the centre of human passions, and Euripides may be using the word in both senses, the metaphorical to assist Eteokles' characterization (c.f. line 1407).

1424: Homer uses the same expression (*γαῖαν ὀδᾶξ εἶλον*) in ILIAD X.17 to describe how many Achaeans were lost during the journey to Ilion. The line is highly ironical: despite all their efforts, the two brothers are dead and nobody is going to take the leadership. They lie side by side, but they were unable to divide the throne. They could not avoid their fate, but of course they are destroyed mainly because of their own actions. Though they thought that what they were doing was right, finally it led them to death.

1425-6: since the whole messenger's speech is addressed to Kreon, we would expect him and not the Chorus to speak here. Perhaps he is too upset to speak, and in any case the Chorus is a more neutral and general commentator on the events since it is not sentimentally involved. Strangely enough, Kreon remains silent until line 1584 when he announces his orders about Oedipous, Antigone and the corpse of Polyneikes. The plot is eased if the two remaining members of the family are on stage when Kreon speaks, and the dramatic effect is emphasized if the audience has already seen and heard their psychological situation. Then Kreon's orders come as the final disaster. This serves as an explanation but not necessarily a full justification of the long gap.

1430: Valckenaer deletes this line in an effort to exclude any reference to Antigone from the Exodos. Certainly the syndesis of a concrete and an abstract noun is most unusual; but the difficulty can be eased if we regard *προθυμία ποδός* as an adverbial dative expressing the manner, and not as governed by the preposition *σύν* (as *παρθένω* clearly is).

1431: *καίριους σφαγᾶς* is a cognate accusative equivalent to *καίρια τραύματα*. The same phenomenon is found at Eur.Andr.1120.

1434: *μαστῶν* symbolizes maternity. We find this word in almost every maternal lament. Iokaste uses it while greeting Polyneikes at the beginning of this play (lines 306-7). Orestes at Aesch.Cho.545 uses the same words referring to his mother, though giving them a negative meaning since he is planning to kill her. In the same tragedy Clytemnestra reminds Orestes of her breasts, which fed him, in an attempt to persuade him to forgive her (lines 897-8). Maternity was a holy feeling and a holy relationship in the ancient world, one that everybody should respect.

1436-7: it is strange to hear these words spoken by Antigone here, since she does not know what is going to happen. It is as if she is making a prophecy. It is probable that she means that since her brothers are dead, they are not going to escort her to her wedding, though her words still sound abrupt. These lines could be the work of an interpolator who wanted somehow to prepare the ending he was going to use. This speech of Antigone's definitely sounds out-of-place, even more so since there is no introduction to it indicating that she will speak.

1443: *εἶπε τάδε* referring to Polyneikes can be contrasted with *φωνήν οὐκ ἀφῆκεν* referring to Eteokles (line 1440); the difference in the characterization of the two brothers is one more time emphasized, though Eteokles is crying now that he is dying giving the impression that he has changed his mind. Eteokles in this tragedy generally is presented as the

selfish brother who is only interested in the throne, while Polyneikes is the one who was forced into exile because his brother did not respect his rights to the throne. He is the one that always expresses intimate feelings for his family and his fatherland (c.f. chapter one).

1446: the word *φίλος* here describes the relationship between Eteokles and Polyneikes not as a friendship, but as a family relationship; the emphasis is not on affection but on their shared kinship as brothers.

1447-50: these lines are coloured with irony, in view of what will happen at the end with Polyneikes' burial. Euripides anticipates this and prepares the audience for the conflict between Kreon and Antigone in this respect. Because of these lines the opinion of some scholars (such as Meredith, 1937) that Antigone will bury Polyneikes outside Thebes and then accompany her father is unsatisfactory, since Polyneikes' specific request is to be buried inside Thebes.

1460-72: scholars tend to give an "historical" interpretation to tragedies, connecting them with the period during which they were written. These lines show that the opposing troops started arguing again, even after the death of their leaders. The play was written around 409 B.C., just four years after Athens' defeat in the Sicilian Expedition. It may be that Euripides, by using this myth, is trying to advise the contemporary Athenian audience to stop a war which has no reason and morality and which can only lead to disaster. Athens and Sparta are presented through Eteokles and Polyneikes (c.f. chapter one). The audience

know now that the two brothers found their own death by not stopping the war, and they can imagine what might happen to themselves.

1465: the reference to Antigone seems out of place here, and that is why Valckenaer (correctly I suspect) deletes the line. Of course, since we know that Antigone went with Iokaste to the battlefield and that Iokaste is dead, we expect to hear what happened to Antigone. Her appearance in line 1476, however, is much more natural; the messenger has finished the description of the reaction of the troops, and he ends his speech by describing Antigone leaving the battlefield with the corpses, after which we expect to see her coming to the stage.

1473: a *τροπαῖον* dedicated to Zeus is also mentioned at line 1250, but there it is on the Argive side.

2.4 LINES 1480-1581

After the messenger's speech the Chorus announces the arrival of the three corpses. This short statement by the Chorus (lines 1480-4) indicates the beginning of the second part of the Exodos (lines 1480-1581) in our arrangement. Antigone is accompanying the dead bodies of her mother and her brothers. She is changed from the young and innocent virgin of the "teichoscopia" (lines 88-201). She appears as a Bacchant of the dead -according to her own words- without luxurious clothes or the covering of her hair. She is not the maiden we met before. She laments the

misfortunes of her family, mentioning the very beginning -the moment that Oedipous solved the riddle and killed the Sphinx- and also the “eris” and the murder that destroyed Oedipous’ palace. Her dirge here resembles Iokaste’s monody greeting Polyneikes (lines 301-53) in several ways. Iokaste then appeared dressed in rags and shearing her hair off; Antigone now is not dressed in the maiden’s luxurious robe, and is hurling the covering from her hair (lines 1485-92). Iokaste was mourning for the coming duel between her sons, while Antigone now mourns for the double death of her brothers. Iokaste mentioned the pain of her breast that fed Polyneikes, and Antigone now refers to the same breast that she shared with her brothers (lines 1526-9). Iokaste’s monody was addressed to Polyneikes, and Antigone now makes a specific reference to Polyneikes who acted according to his name (line 1493). Furthermore, they both mention the destroyed palace, Oedipous’ blindness and “eris”, the cause of all the unfortunate events. Finally Antigone calls Oedipous, who has been concealed inside the palace by his sons ever since his sins came to light, i.e. that he killed his father and married his mother (lines 1533-8).

Oedipous, the blind king, appears in the light (line 1539). He is a blind and weak old man, self described as a flying dream and a figure coming up from the dead (lines 1543-5). A dialogue between him and his daughter follows, during which he is informed about the final disaster, namely the suicide of his mother-wife, who always guided his blind steps, and the double fratricide of his sons. Antigone closes this second part of the Exodos by describing

to her blind father how the rest of the family died (lines 1567-81).

1480: The Chorus is referring to the previous messenger's speech. The same pattern is found at Aesch.Theb.848, where in the fourth stasimon the Chorus mentions the speech made previously by the messenger. In both cases the statement of the Chorus plays the role of a link between previous and succeeding events.

1482: *πτώματα νεκρῶν* (= corpses of the dead) would be a pleonasm in Modern Greek, where the word *πτῶμα* bears the meaning "dead body", a meaning that the word expresses even here at line 1697. In Ancient Greek, though, things were normally different. The word is derived from the root of the verb *πίπτω* (= I fall), so that literally it simply refers to something that has already fallen, and this is the meaning that the word bears here.

1484: the word *αἰών* (= lifetime) is commonly used in the Epic bearing the meaning of life. In fact in ILIAD. X.58 we find the word in the feminine gender. As was mentioned in the previous chapter, Euripides was fond of using epic characteristics in his tragedies Here he is employing this epic usage to create an oxymoron between the preceding adjective and this noun (*σκοτίαν αἰῶνα* = dark life), in order to emphasize the deaths of Eteokles, Polyneikes and Iokaste.

1485-1529: Antigone laments the double death of her brothers. As we have already seen in the introduction, her dirge shows many common characteristics with Iokaste's monody at the beginning of the play. All these similarities prove common style and content in this play.

1485: this is the only time that the word *βοτρυχάδης* appears in tragedy. It is derived from the rare word *βότρυχος*, which seems to mean either “a bunch of grapes” or “hair”, and which sometimes appears by conjecture (almost certainly unnecessary) at Eur.Or.1267. Euripides may be using the word here to imply a comparison between Antigone’s curly hair and a bunch of grapes, but another attractive explanation would be to replace the word with the very similar *βοτρνώδεος*, which would have no effect on the metre, and would instead compare Antigone’s young cheeks to blooming grapes. This adjective is used by Euripides at Bakkh.12: *ἀμπέλου...βοτρνώδει χλόη*.

1487: the word *φοίνικα* shows cohesion in the tragedy, since the title of the play and the name of the Chorus are derived from it. The word has already been used with a geographical sense at lines 6 (*Φοίνισσαν χθόνα*), 204 (*Φοινίσσας ἀπό νάσου*), and 280 (*Φοίνισσα γῆ*). In its everyday use the word refers to the colour red, and in this way it is connected with the theme of blood and bloodshed which appears in this play, since red is the colour of blood. That is why the messenger uses the word *φοινίου* to describe the battle between the two brothers (line 1378).

1489: the phrase *βάκχα νεκύων* contains an oxymoron, since bacchantes were supposed to take part in the joyful dances of Dionysus and not to lament the dead. Antigone though can be described as a bacchant if we focus our attention on her frenzy in the face of all these misfortunes. Euripides uses a similar oxymoron, which is achieved by the use of the privative prefix (*α*) in front of the adjective, at Or.319-

20 (*ἀβάκχευτον θίασον ἐν δάκρυσι και γόοις*) and at Or.1492-3 (*ἄθυρσοι δραμόντε Βάκχαι σκύμνον ἐν χεροῖν ὀρείαν ξυνήρπασαν*).

1490-1: Antigone came directly from the battlefield, and so did not have time to change. Therefore she just takes off her headdress, a typical sign of mourning. In so doing she abandons her womanly modesty. This point marks the change in Antigone's characterization in this play. In the "teichoscopia", if we accept its genuineness, Antigone appeared as an innocent child who was admiring the troops, but now she is a grown-up, a mature woman, ready to face her responsibilities. The same feature of mourning is also found at Eur.Andr.829-35, where Hermione does exactly the same thing while lamenting.

1492: the word *ἀγεμόνευμα*, an abstract noun describing a person, is used in place of the corresponding concrete noun *ἡγεμών*. Euripides uses the same device at Ion.748, where the word *δούλευμα* is used instead of *δοῦλος*.

1493: the word *ἐπώνυμος* is used with the meaning of "worthy of his name". Antigone invokes Polyneikes in this way to show her despair, since this eris of his (Polyneikes = many *νείκη*) led him to death. We find the word *ἐπώνυμος* bearing the same meaning at Eur.Rhes.158 (where Hector describes Dolon) and at Aesch.Eum.90 (where Apollo uses it to describe Hermes).

1495: Euripides is using repetition to make the line more emotional and tragic; the particular technique used here is that the first word (*ἔρις*) is repeated negatively the second time. Euripides uses straightforward repetition in many

dramatic passages, as at Hel.195 (in the parodos of the play, where Helen laments), or at Andr.1186 (*ὃ γάμος, ὃ γάμος, ὅς τάδε δώματα καὶ πόλιν ὄλεσας ὄλεσας*). The more rhetorical technique found here, where the second repetition is negative, is also used at Hel.1134 (*γέρας, οὐ γέρας ἄλλ' ἔριν*)

1500: c.f. line 1495.

1503: Antigone is blaming Erinyes for the downfall of the house of Oedipus here. Later on she will consider Oedipous' curse responsible (line 1556) and finally she will accuse an anonymous god (line 1580). At Supp.834-5 Erinyes is again held responsible for Oedipous' disaster; at Aesch.Ag.1119 Erinyes destroys the house of Agamemnon as well.

1505: the Thebans believed that Oedipous' arrival in their city marked the beginning of the disaster for the house, as we have seen at line 1048 and as we shall see later on at line 1689. "Ὅτε here, therefore, does not mean "ever since", but "when", as usual.

1507: we would not expect to find the participle *φονεύσας* in the Aorist tense, but since the main verb (*ἔγνω*) is in this tense too, the tense of the participle is justified grammatically. This participle can be interpreted either a) literally or b) metaphorically:

a) Euripides here mentions his version of the myth, according to which Oedipous actually killed the Sphinx, a local monster, and in this way he delivered Thebes;

b) the Sphinx killed herself after Oedipous solved the riddle. In solving the riddle he made the Sphinx kill herself, and so in a way he killed her. This interpretation seems more in keeping with the Aorist participle.

Strangely enough, wherever Euripides mentions the Sphinx in this play, he never clarifies her death, but only mentions that after Oedipous solved the riddle he became king of Thebes and married Iokaste.

Reference to monsters is another important linking thread in this play. Monsters are mentioned either literally (as is done here) or metaphorically (lines 1380-1, 1573-4) usually where he describes the duel of the two brothers. It could be argued furthermore that in this way Euripides shows that Thebes in general and Oedipous' family in particular have been destroyed by monsters, Sphinx in the first case, the two brothers, who act like monsters, in the second (c.f. chapter three).

1509-13: this passage causes great difficulties in interpretation. Line 1512 seems to be out of place, since it is a genitive that qualifies ἕτερος (τίς.....ἕτερος αἵματος ἀμερίου ἔτλα.....would be the normal word order), but ἕτερος already governs another genitive, τῶν προπάροιθ' εὐγενετῶν. One could feel tempted to delete the line, but this would create an extra syllable in the previous line, unless the word τῶνδε is deleted as well (see below).

Furthermore, the meaning and the implication of the word Ἑλλάς is vague here. Often in tragedy the word appears as a personification of its people, as at Aesch.Pers.234 or at Eur.Heracl.219; but the situation is different here. Sometimes it is used as an adjective, qualifying words expressing place, such as χθῶν (Aesch.Supp.243) or πόλις (Eur.Andr.169); this interpretation would not work here, however, since there is

no such noun in the text. A number of other possibilities are open:

a) the poet is making a contrast between living people and those of a former generation. The disjunction with *βάρβαρος* is then awkward, however.

b) *Ἑλλάς* is used as an adjective qualifying the implied noun *γαῖα*, similarly to S.Trach.1060 (*οὔθ' Ἑλλάς οὔτ' ἄγλωσσος*), though there the qualified noun appears in the next line. Then the same noun would be implied after *βάρβαρος*, and the places would actually mean the people living in them. But then the disjunction with *τῶν προπάροιθ' εὐγενετῶν* is awkward.

The most likely explanation of all these problems is either that a number of lines have dropped out of the manuscript, or that there is some kind of corruption. To solve the problems (both metrical and syntactical) the text could be restored as follows:

ἦ is moved from the end of line 1509 to the beginning of line 1510 and the word *αἶ'* (meaning *γαῖα*) is added instead; *προπάροιθ'* in line 1510 loses its first syllable; and *τοσῶνδε* in line 1511 is deleted together with the next line. Thus:

1509 = *Τίς Ἑλλάς ἦ βάρβαρος αἶ'* (cho. dim.)

1510 = *ἦ τῶν πάροιθ' εὐγενετῶν* (cho. dim.)

1511 = *ἕτερος ἔτλα κακῶν* (κ δ)

1512 = *τοιᾶδ' ἄγεα φανερά;* (δ)

1514: since the impersonal use of the verb *ἐλελίζω* is unparalleled, the verb here must be in the middle voice and Antigone must actually be addressing herself. Possibly Euripides is using this device to emphasize the frenzied

condition Antigone finds herself in. In any case, Euripides is fond of this verb, which is commonly used in Epic as well. Craik (1988) mentions another verb *έλελίζω*, very rare in the present and usually found in the middle voice, meaning “whirl round” or “move in coils”. This meaning is less likely in the context of this line, however, since Antigone is lamenting, crying and shouting. In L.S.J. also this passage of the “Phoenissae” is considered to bear the meaning of “cry”.

1520: Antigone not only laments for the present misfortunes, but also cries for the misfortunes that will follow (*προκλαίω*), referring both to Oedipous and to herself.

1524-5: it was a common belief among the Ancient Greeks that the relatives should leave a lock of their hair with the dead. Often connected with this custom is Orestes, but we also see it occurring at Eur.Tro.480 (where Hecuba laments her sons), at ILIAD. Ψ.135 (during Patroklos’ burial) and at ODYS. ω.46 (for the death of Achilleus).

1533: according to L.S.J. the use of the preposition *έπί* with the dative case bearing the meaning of “in” is unparalleled. A possible solution would be to replace the preposition with the adverb *έτι* (with no consequences to the metre); then the dative *δώμασιν* would be adverbial, indicating place. The replacement of the preposition with *ένί* would be appealing as well, but such a use of the word *ένί* in tragedy is unparalleled.

1534: the word *άέριος* literally means “surrounded by fog”. Here it is used metaphorically to describe Oedipous’ blindness: since he is blind and cannot see, it is as if he is surrounded by fog.

1535: Euripides here uses an adjective (*μακρόπουνν*) which contains an element closely related to the noun it qualifies, *ζόαν*. This schema characterizes his style (e.g. line 1549 *πόδα τυφλόπουνν*, and also Ba.168 *κῶλον ταχύπουνν*, though these two are more extreme examples).

1536: Euripides is preparing the audience for the appearance of Oedipus. The construction *ἀλαίνων πόδα* is similar to *βαίνων πόδα*, meaning “putting one’s foot forward”.

1539: Euripides probably uses the word *βακτρεύμασι* literally here. Oedipus is using a stick to guide his blind tread, the same expression having already been used at line 834 to describe Teiresias. Apart from its literal use here, the word *βάκτρον* can be used metaphorically to describe the help and support that elderly people need, as we can see at Eur.Hec.281 (*πόλις, τιθήνη, βάκτρον, ἡγεμών ὁδοῦ*), where Hecuba begs Odysseus not to take away her daughter Polyxena. It is not used metaphorically here, however, since Oedipus comes from inside the palace, while Antigone is already outside; thus Antigone cannot logically be his *βάκτρον* at this moment. Of course the word *βάκτρευμα* is abstract, but it may be replacing a concrete noun.

1543-5: Euripides describes old age here using a simile. Old people are presented as flying dreams, dead people under the ground and invisible images in the air. This kind of simile is commonly used in tragedy, as at Aesch.Ag.82 (where the chorus characterizes the old age as *ὄναρ ἡμερόφαντον*) and at Soph.OC.109-10 (where Oedipus describes himself as an *ἄθλιον εἶδωλον*).

1549: Euripides and probably all Greek tragedians are bold in their treatment of intransitive verbs. That is why *ἐμόχθει* governs *πόδα*, though it is normally intransitive. We find exactly the same syntactical phenomenon at Eur.H.F.281, where the expression *τέκνα ἀμόχθησα* is used.

1551: two synonyms appear here in asyndeton (*στενάχειν, ἀνυτεῖν*). This is another example of repetition for emphasis (c.f. line 1495). The same technique is found at Eur.Ion.1446 (*ἀύσω, βοάσω*) and at Aesch.Theb.186 (*αὔειν, λακάζειν*).

1553: *ποιῶ...πᾶς*: such double questions are a common device in rhetoric, Epic and Euripides.

1556: the word *ἀλάστωρ* is found in many tragedies. Usually it describes the avenging spirit which is connected to a dead man whose soul seeks vengeance. It is dangerous both for the sinner and for everyone else associated with him; so it ended up meaning the sinner. Here it expresses the curse which Oedipous “inherited” from Laius and which has fallen on his sons also; or perhaps just the curse that he uttered on his sons. At Eur.Med.1333 the curse that Medea received from her family is described with the same word by Jason. Clytaimestra talks about Agamemnon’s *ἀλάστωρ* at Aesch.Ag.1501. Finally Oedipous himself mentions his avenging spirit as *χώρας ἀλάστωρ οὐμός ἐνναίων ἀεί* at S.O.C.788.

1567: Euripides, instead of using the verb *δακρύω*, uses its substantive (*δάκρυα*) governed by the middle voice participle of the verb *τίθημι*. This is a common expression among the tragic poets: Eur.Or.1121 (*γόους θησόμεσθ’*), Eur.And.826 (*σπάραγμα θήσομαι*), Eur.Med.66 (*σιγήν*

θήσομαι), Eur.Ion.863 (ἀγώνας τιθέμεσθα), and S.Ai.13 (σπουδὴν ἔθου).

1568-9: this is a typical Euripidean repetition of the type parodied by Aristophanes at Frogs.1351-5, during Aeschylus' and Euripides' debate on which of them is the better tragedian (c.f. line 1495 also).

1570: at ILIAD. E.466 Homer describes the battle of Priam's sons against the Greeks in a similar way, though there the mention of the gate implies a threat to the city.

1572: the phrase κοινόν ἐνυάλιον is derived from ILIAD.Σ.309 (ξυνός Ἐνυάλιος). It has already been mentioned several times that Euripides is fond of using epic phrases and characteristics.

1573: another epic simile is used here; the fighting brothers are compared to fighting animals (c.f. lines 1380-1 and 1507). Their bestial character is once again asserted (c.f. line 1296).

2.5 LINES 1582-1767

This concluding part of the Exodos starts -as expected- with a brief comment made by the Chorus (lines 1582-3). Kreon speaks again after a long silence ever since line 1355. Following Eteokles' orders he nominates himself as the new sovereign of Thebes and he announces Antigone's marriage to Haemon and Oedipus' exile, a necessity following Teiresias' remarks. Kreon's speech here seems to be inconsistent with his dialogue with Eteokles (lines 690-783)

and with Teiresias (lines 834-974). Furthermore his reappearance here after such a long silence during the messenger's narrative, Antigone's monody and Oedipous' and Antigone's kommos produces staging problems (c.f. commentary).

Oedipous responds next to the sentence of exile. His speech can be divided into two parts. In the first part (lines 1595-1614) he gives a narration of his misfortunes ever since he was born. His narration is very similar to Iokaste's in the prologue (lines 19-87). Similarities can be seen in content (Apollo's oracle, Kithairon and Polybos, Laios' murder, Oedipous' marriage to Iokaste and the birth of children-brothers, and Oedipous' curse on his sons) and also in the words used (*σπείρας πατήρ, λέκτρα μητρώων γάμων-λέχος μητρός*, and especially lines 18-22 and 1595-1601). Of course, since both of them are narrating the same story, this is expected. But the phenomenon can also be regarded as an element of consistency in the play: two "parallel" narrations are found towards the beginning and towards the end of the play thus creating a ring composition by means of which the tragedy starts and finishes in the same way. In the second part of his speech (lines 1615-24) Oedipous tries to persuade Kreon not to send him into exile, but he does not lose his dignity and he refuses to beg Kreon for mercy. Kreon refuses, and he adds another order also, again following Eteokles' orders: Polyneikes is not to be buried (lines 1625-39). This provokes Antigone's reaction, and a stichomythia between them follows (lines 1646-82). Antigone's determination to bury her brother is faced by

Kreon's bold refusal; she therefore moderates her demand to just cleaning the corpse and covering the wounds. But even this is refused by Kreon, and so in complete frustration she threatens to kill Haimon like a Danaid on their wedding night if she is forced to marry him, with the result that Kreon has to let her go. Although it might not seem so (since Antigone does not succeed in convincing Kreon), Antigone is the moral winner in this stichomythia, though it is not specified at the end what will happen with Polyneikes' burial. She is the one that fights to fulfil her duty towards the dead (such an important element in Ancient Greek morality) and she is prepared to do anything to succeed; Kreon on the other hand reaches a point where he could be accused of committing "ὑβρις" by denying the natural right of a person to be buried. If we accept the authenticity of the teichoscopia, we see in the words of Antigone here the culmination of the change in her characterization from an innocent child to a responsible heroine.

The whole play finishes with a dialogue between Oedipous and Antigone, and with their departure. Both of them are in despair and lamenting for their misfortunes. They say farewell to the corpses, and then Oedipous mentions Apollo's oracle that he should die in Kolonos (lines 1703-9). The way Antigone's and Oedipous' departure is described here reminds us partly of her appearance with the slave in the teichoscopia (lines 88-108), but more specifically of Teiresias' arrival with his daughter described at lines 834-44. Nautical imagery is used in both passages (*ναυβάταισιν ἄστρον, ναυσίπομπον αὔραν*); and a contrast

between the old and incapable father and the young and devoted daughter who will guide the “old steps” is made. The final reference to Semele, Dionysos and the ritual dance reminds us of the role of the gods in Oedipous’ family. The play ends with an invocation to Nike by the Chorus, perhaps an ironic touch if we consider the actual “victory” of Oedipous and his sons. Of course this comment by the Chorus may simply be interpreted as their wish to win in the competition where this tragedy is presented. Euripides uses exactly the same invocation to conclude two more of his tragedies as well, namely Orestes and Iphigenia in Tauris, although in the latter of these at least the invocation does not sound ironical at all, since Iphigenia, Orestes and the virgins of the Chorus leave safely for Greece with the help of the “deus ex machina”, Athena, and a genuinely happy ending is achieved.

1582-3: the third part of the Exodos starts with this statement by the Chorus. These lines have been suspected as interpolations, since they repeat in a way Antigone's last three lines, and furthermore they appear to claim that Oedipous’ misfortunes started on this day, though we already know that he was unfortunate even from the day he was born. Two solutions have been suggested:

- a) to adopt the alternative MSS reading *ὑπῆρξεν* instead of *κατῆρξεν*. Then the Chorus would actually be saying that this day was one of many misfortunes for Oedipous;
- b) to derive from these lines the meaning that this day marked the beginning of a new “cycle” of misfortunes for Oedipous. This solution seems preferable, since then these

lines are a preparation for Oedipous' exile, his final downfall. We know that he faced misfortunes even before, but for an old and blind king this is the final one.

Nevertheless another problem still remains: the Chorus expresses the wish that life may be happier, though they do not explain whose life they are talking about. Also Kreon's speech, which starts with the command to stop lamentations, would come more naturally immediately after Antigone's emotional account of Iokaste's death.

1584-94: Kreon's statements here seem inconsistent with previous parts of the play. During his dialogue with Eteokles (lines 690-783) nothing was mentioned about Antigone's dowry or about his becoming sovereign. Erbse (1966) believes that Eteokles authorized Kreon to be Antigone's "*ἡγεμῶν*", so that he would have to deal with her fortune and even with the throne. In fact, however, this is not what Eteokles suggested during his speech to Kreon. On the other hand, Eteokles did ask Kreon to arrange everything needed for Antigone's marriage to Haemon, and this -according to Ancient Greek customs -definitely included a dowry. Furthermore, since Eteokles specifically asked for Kreon's help in that serious situation for Thebes, it may have been implied through all that passage that Kreon would succeed him. And yet this should have been declared clearly at some point. After all, in view of the fact that Oedipous has already been dishonoured by his sons and that both his sons are dead, Kreon logically should become the new king of Thebes as the nearest in kinship to the dead. Paley (1860) even suggests that Kreon becomes sovereign in place of his yet

unmarried son Haemon, who later on will take the throne after marrying Antigone. Kreon also claims here that Teiresias suggested Oedipous' exile (lines 886-8), which is a complete distortion of Teiresias' words. The prophet developing an argument of Iokaste at the beginning of the play (lines 4-6) expressed the idea that no member of Oedipous' family should have lived in the city for Thebes to flourish, but he was clearly referring to the past and not to the future as Kreon does here. If these inconsistencies are seen as a way to characterize Kreon, who does not actually lie, but rather reinterprets the facts, as being selfish, they can be explained. Of course such interpretations, based mainly on one's belief about what Euripides intended to show, can be very subjective.

Within the speech itself we might notice another inconsistency: Kreon suggests that it is time to bury the dead, but then he starts talking about Eteokles' orders and Teiresias' predictions mentioning nothing concerning the burial until later on, at line 1630. A solution to this problem could be that it is natural to try to fulfil a dead person's last wishes (in this case Eteokles') as the first stage of his burial, but this then does not account for the mention of Teiresias' predictions.

1585: here again Euripides, instead of using the verb *μέμνημαι*, uses its substantive (*μνήμην*) with the infinitive of the verb *τίθεμαι* (c.f. line 1567).

1590-1: the use of *οὐ μή* (*ποτέ*) with the future infinitive expressing denial in indirect speech is unusual. The normal rule in direct speech is that denial is expressed by *οὐ μή* and

the aorist subjunctive (*οὐ μὴ εἶ πρόξῃ πόλις*), while *οὐ μὴ* and the future indicative expresses prohibition. Here therefore in indirect speech we should expect the aorist subjunctive to be represented by an aorist infinitive, so that instead of *πράξειν* the correct reading ought perhaps to be *πράξαι*.

1595-1614: this part of Oedipous' speech presents many difficulties. Incoherences raise the question of interpolation. In addition, the syntactical problems make the language unworthy of Euripides. Scholars have suggested deletion of some or even all of these lines. In fact Craik (1988) marks five lines, i.e. 1604-7 and 1613 as spurious, while Fraenkel (1963) believes that this entire part of the speech is spurious on linguistic grounds. Instead he assumes that Oedipous after learning that he will be sent to exile, asks what he should do. On the other hand, what Oedipus gives here is a summary of past and present misfortunes, a technique used by Euripides also at Andr.395-420 and at H.F.1340-93.

1597: we should understand the participle *ὄντα* to explain the word *ἄγονον* (*καίπερ ἄγονον ὄντα*). The same ellipse is found at Eur.Andr.709 (*καί παῖς ἄτεκνος*).

1599: we would expect to see the infinitive *γενέσθαι* in the future tense; but the main verb that governs this infinitive (*ἐθέσπισεν*) expresses oracular response, and thus is already referring to the future. The same "oracular construction" is found also at Eur.I.T.1013-4 (*ἐθέσπισεν κομίσαι*). The aorist tense is therefore normal, while the sentence as a whole presents Oedipous' fortune as the will of the gods.

1603: the same idea is also expressed at Eur.Ion.1492-4; Kreousa too did not have the chance to feed her baby with milk from her breast nor to wash him, but Ion was thrown all alone to the beasts. Euripides favours the use of women's breasts as a symbol of maternity (c.f. lines 1526-7, 30-1, 306-7).

1604-7: these lines seem problematic and spurious. The idea of Oedipous being a slave to Polybos is mistaken, since according to the myth Oedipous was in fact adopted by him. Syntactical problems are presented by *τέ*, whose position and use cannot be explained; by *γάρ*, which does not explain anything; and by the peculiar Greek phrase *δουλεῦσαι ἀμφὶ δεσπότην*. Erbse (1966) expressed the opinion that Oedipous felt himself to have been a slave to Polybos, because he was not his real father but Oedipous was still dependant on him (for food etc.). Against this it should be noted that it is quite an extreme idea to perceive the relationship between children and parents as slavery, since children are naturally dependant on their parents until a certain age. According to L.S.J. this verb never governs this preposition with the accusative. The image of Oedipous finding himself on Kithairon and being saved (or in fact maybe not) by Polybos is derived from S.OT.(457, 1349-50, 1391).

1610: also in S.OT.457-8 Oedipous appears to be the father and the brother of his sons (*φανήσεται δὲ παισὶ τοῖς αὐτοῦ ξυνῶν ἀδελφός αὐτός καὶ πατήρ*).

1611: since the prologue (line 67) the curse usually mentioned in this play is the one laid by Oedipous on his sons after they "imprisoned" him; but the curse mentioned

here is the one that Pelops laid on Laios, because he kidnapped his son Chrysippos. In fact Oedipous “inherited” this curse and “transferred” it to his sons. Antigone also mentions this route of the curse in lines 1556-8.

1613: *ὥστε* introduces a result clause here. After the negative main clause one would have expected the verb to be in the infinitive (*μηχανήσασθαι*), not in the indicative as it is.

1615: *εἶεν* used in monologues indicates change of theme.

1618: Euripides often uses descriptive compound adjectives with *παῖς* as the second component, as again at I.T.1234, *εὐπαις ὁ Λατοῦς γόνος*. He uses such adjectives around 20 times in his plays, while in the other two tragedians they appear only about 5 times in each.

1622: the phrase *έλιξας χεῖρας* is also found at Eur.I.T.1270.

1623-4: Oedipous is not going to plead with Kreon, in order not to lose his dignity. *Εὐγενές* here bears the meaning of “noble in birth”.

1628-9: *πόλιν πατρίδα* is a phrase consisting of two nouns; therefore one cannot qualify the other unless *πατρίδα* is considered as an adjective, but then it is usually followed by the noun *γαῖα* (c.f.A.Th.585, S.OT.641, Ar.Th.859). An alternative explanation would be to consider *πόλιν* as the object of the participle *πέρσων* and *πατρίδα* as an adverbial accusative indicating direction after a verb expressing motion (*ἦλθε*), though still the phrase sounds somewhat clumsy.

1630: Euripides has prepared us to hear this order in lines 775-7 (Eteokles’ orders to Kreon) and 1448-51 (Polyneikes’

last wish). In view of the fact that in antiquity even enemies were allowed to bury their dead, this order seems striking. Eteokles only ordered the corpse not to be buried inside the city (as would befit a traitor), and Polyneikes' last wish was to be buried inside the city. This distortion by Kreon becomes even more strange since the issue remains vague until the end of the play, though burial of the dead was such an important issue in tragedy. Antigone leaves with Oedipous for exile; a few lines before the end of the play she repeats her decision to bury her brother, but we do not by the end see any indication of her doing it, or any clear reference to what her plans on this matter are. Euripides dedicated another of his plays to this ancient moral principal, i.e. "Supplikes". In Eur.El.902 we see Electra refusing to insult Aigisthos' corpse as Orestes suggests, because she considers it an act of *ὑβρις*. Sophokles was inspired by this aspect of the Greek moral system to write his "Antigone". In S.Aj.1175-7 Teukros states that anyone who tries to insult the dead will himself be thrown unburied out of the city. Finally at S.El.1487-90 Aigisthos considers burial of the dead a moral duty of the living.

1632: it was a normal custom in Ancient Greece to crown the dead with *σέλινον*. Andromache requests this treatment for her son's corpse (Eur.Tro.1144) and Antigone does the same at S.Ant.431.

1633: *γῆ καλύπτων* is used instead of *θάπτων*. It appears to be a poetic periphrasis.

1634: more or less the same line exists at S.Ant.29 arousing suspicion of interpolation, especially since the syntax here is unusual.

1635: Euripides puts *τριπτύχους θρήνους νεκρῶν* instead of *θρήνους τριπτύχων νεκρῶν* here. This is a case of hypallage of the adjective.

1636: Antigone takes no notice of this command, which is why Kreon repeats it to his attendants at line 1660.

1637: the participle *ἐποῦσαν* instead of *ἰοῦσαν* would be more usual in this phrase, but then the metre would be problematic (an anapaest in the fourth foot). In addition, the use of the participle and the indicative of the same verb (*μένουσ ’, μένει*) in line 1638 is clumsy. A possible solution instead of both problems would be to delete lines 1637-8. It is strange to see Kreon ordering Antigone to prepare for marriage the day after her family’s deaths.

1640: the idea that the living suffer more than those who die, has already been expressed by Aeschylus in Theb.336 through the words of the Chorus.

1641: this schema of presenting the idea of totality by using *οὐ τό μὲν.....τό δε οὐ* is also found at Eur.Hel.647: *οὐχ ὁ μὲν τλήμων ὁ δ’ οὐ*.

1643: this line is full of sarcasm. Antigone emphasizes bitterly the fact that she is talking to Kreon, the n e w sovereign. She is addressing him by using the second person pronoun followed by the very characteristic which she deplores. The same phenomenon is found at Eur.Med.271 (*σέ τήν σκυθρωπόν καί πόσει θυμουμένην*).

1644-5: these two staccato questions are meant to show Antigone's psychological situation. She is not only sad about the death of her brothers and of her mother, but also frustrated by the new misfortunes she must face. Her words are full of irony, and she seems to believe that Kreon is creating new moral laws, unknown to the gods. Antigone is seen expressing the same opinion at S.Ant.449-55, where neither Zeus nor Dike ever gave such orders to people, but it is Kreon who is trying to overrule gods' laws.

Kreon answers the second question only, as he has already discussed the exile with Oedipous, and furthermore a new subject has come up, i.e. Polyneikes' burial.

1646: *βουλεύματα* bears the meaning not only of "wishes", but also of "resolutions".

1647: Euripides uses *γέ* here for emphasis and to avoid repeating the word *βουλεύματα* again. As Denniston (1954) states this use of *γέ* is very common in tragic poetry, especially in stichomythia, where economy of space is important (c.f. S.OT.365, Eur.Hel.104).

1653: the meaning of *δαίμων* is difficult to define here. The word *δαίμων* appears in several places in Euripides with different meanings. At Alc.561 as well as at Cycl 110 it has the meaning of "plight" or "misfortune"; at Andr.98 it is used to mean "fate". Two different suggestions have been made for this line:

a] Polyneikes surrendered his conscious mind to his fate (Craik, 1988), which seems rather odd.

b] *δαίμων* actually means "plight" here.

Another appealing explanation would be to change the line to: οὐκοῦν ἔδωκε τήν δίκην τῷ δαίμονι, thus treating τῇ τύχῃ as a gloss identifying the meaning of τῷ δαίμονι a gloss which then somehow entered the text. Then this line would mean: “he rendered the penalty to fate”, which would match with the next line and contradict line 1651.

1654: Euripides wants to show that the necessary duty towards the dead will not be fulfilled by Kreon. The word τάφῳ in actual fact means here that Polyneikes will remain unburied.

1656: ὡς μάθης, said by Kreon here, is “answered” by Antigone at line 1681.

1659: Antigone’s idea that two friends should be buried side by side is repeated from S.Ant.73.

1660: c.f. line 1636.

1664: ὑγρᾶν κόνιν seems an awkward combination of adjective and noun. Maybe it is another case of oxymoron, the schema that Euripides so much favours. In fact three explanations of the reason why the dust is wet can be suggested:

a] the field is wet with the brothers’ blood; but we are no longer in the battlefield where the duel took place;

b] ὑγρᾶν bears the meaning of “flowing”, but although limbs and other such supple objects are often so described, L.S.J. gives no support to applying this sense to something like dust;

c] while a corpse is being buried, the dust becomes wet with the χοαί that take place. Χοαί for corpses before their burial are often mentioned in ancient texts. We find the custom

mentioned in Epic at ILIAD. Y.256, and also at S.Ant.431, where Antigone “crowns” the corpse with *χοαί*. Following this path we can interpret Kreon’s statement as a prohibition of any ritual action towards the corpse. This seems the most likely explanation.

1665: *vaí* is a very rare word in tragedy. Euripides uses it also at Hipp.605 and at I.A.1247, and in all cases the word is followed by the preposition *πρός*, and bears the meaning of “please”. The word appears with the same meaning once in comedy at Ar.Nub.784. This is the meaning here too, since Antigone is pleading with Kreon to change his orders.

1667: the nearest female kin to the dead was supposed to wash the corpse and take care of any necessary tasks. The same idea is expressed earlier in this tragedy, at lines 1318-9, when Kreon expects Iokaste to take care of the corpse of Menoikeus. Antigone here starts realizing that she will not change Kreon’s mind, and so she is trying to persuade him to let her do at least some small necessary tasks for the corpse.

1668: Kreon considers even the washing of Polyneikes’ corpse one of the things prohibited to or by the city. The same idea exactly is expressed at S.Ant.44, where Ismene again mentions the *ἀπόρρητα πόλει*.

1669: Antigone lessens her request to just to be allowed to cover Polyneikes’ wounds with bandages. The same custom is mentioned at Eur.Tro.1232.

1672: the future indicative with *ού* is strange here, although it could express Kreon’s determination. A better way, however, to express the virtual prohibition that Kreon

utters here, would be to change *οὐκ* to *οὐδ'*: then Kreon would be continuing speaking from line 1670 (*οὐκ ἔσθ' ὅπως.....τιμήσεις.....οὐδ'.....κτήσει.....*) and ignoring Antigone's words.

1673: Antigone resents Kreon after he has made up his mind to commit a serious moral crime and leave her brother unburied. She cannot even bear the thought that she will marry his son; that is the idea that the participle expresses here: she would rather die than marry Haimon.

1675: the Danaides of this line are the daughters of Danaos, who killed their husbands on their wedding night. It seems more logical for Antigone to mention these Danaides here, when she is threatening Kreon that she will kill his son if she is forced to marry him. Of course the same word can be used to describe also the Argive troops. They are already described as *Δαναϊδῶν* (sons of Danaus) at lines 466, 860 and 1245. When the word bears this meaning the accent is different (*Δαναϊδῶν*, but *Δαναίδων* here)

1676: it is not at all clear if Kreon addresses the Chorus' leader or Oedipous here. In the second case, the use of the verb *εἶδες* referring to a blind king is striking. Perhaps it implies that for him Antigone's taunt is so remarkable and obvious that even a blind person can clearly see it. The use of the verb in such a textual environment is very common in Modern Greek.

1677: the custom of swearing by a sword was very common in Ancient Greece. Antigone here is either swearing by the hypothetical sword that the Danaids used to murder their husbands, or by the sword of Polyneikes, which she

actually touches. The second alternative seems more probable.

1678: the prefix *ἐκ* is used for emphasis before the verb *προθυμῆ*.

1680: Antigone is characterized in the same way by Kreon at S.Ant.470.

1682: this is the last time we hear Kreon speaking in the play. Thus scholars share the opinion that he leaves the stage. In fact, however, after his long debate with Antigone and Oedipous this is a very weak line to utter just before his departure; on the other hand, Antigone's threats make Kreon's position very weak, but we should still expect further indications in the tragedy if he is in fact leaving, so that we cannot be at all sure that he does.

1683: *μέν* in this line finds its necessary counterpart, in line 1685. Antigone in fact interrupts Oedipous here.

1684: the condition is elliptical, since there is no main clause. The scholiast fills this gap by supplying *οὐκ ἄν καλῶς ἔχοι* as the implied main clause.

1687: *πίπτω* (*πεσών*) is one of the verbs that Euripides favours (c.f. lines 640, 1482). This is another verb commonly used by Homer (e.g. ILIAD. Z.307, ODYS. μ.410). Though the other two tragedians naturally use the verb sometimes as well, it is much more common in Euripides.

1688: the literal answer to this question is obvious. But Antigone asks it in an effort to remind Oedipous of his triumphs, and so to encourage him for the future. The same use of *ποῦ* (not followed by a verb) is also found at Eur.Tro.428 and at Eur.Supp.127.

1689: Oedipous is referring to the one day on which he solved the Sphinx's riddle, saved Thebes, and then became its king, but then simultaneously married his mother.

1692: to be sent into exile is shameful, especially for a girl with a blind father, since women must always have a male protector. But since Antigone is modest and her character is virtuous, this departure holds no shame; indeed it is noble, because she can protect her father.

1693: Oedipous calls Iokaste Antigone's mother here, but two lines later on he calls her his own mother. This "inconsistency" turns out to be most effective since it reminds us just before the final downfall of one of the first and main disasters that Oedipous' family faced.

1694: *ἰδοῦ* is a common Euripidean word (c.f. lines 106, 1700, 1714, and Eur.Or.144).

1699: *τυφλήν* is an adjective usually used to qualify the eyes. But since Oedipous is blind and therefore someone must guide his hand to touch the corpses, his hand is regarded as blind as well.

1702: this line appears in two different forms:

a] *ὄμμα Πολυνείκους*: this is a modern emendation of the line. In this form the line seems to contain an unwanted contrast with the blind Oedipous. On the other hand *ὄμμα* accords with the word *πρόσωπα* in line 1699. Oedipous wants to touch the miserable faces, and that may be why Antigone is commenting here on Polyneikes' eyes.

b] *ὄνομα Πολυνείκους*: Antigone has mentioned Polyneikes as a name on several occasions in this tragedy (c.f. line 1494). Even now that he is dead because of the strife with his

brother, Antigone still mentions his name (which is connected with strife) in an intimate way, indicating how much she loves her brother. Furthermore, Euripides is characterized by a tendency to play with names.

1703-7: these lines show a strong resemblance to S.O.C. Thus Vellacott treats them as later additions. Conacher also believes that they are interpolated. On the other hand Euripides often refers to Attic legends in his plays and gives details about the future fortunes of his characters. At Eur.Hec.1265-73 Polymestor explains to Hecuba Dionysus' oracle; also at Eur.Bac.1331-9 Dionysus talks about Zeus' oracle. Therefore the reference to the oracle here is not that striking. And yet, it is rather strange for the oracle to be mentioned where it is, since it would come more naturally after line 1692 or even after line 1687. There Antigone and Oedipous were talking about the exile, and Oedipous could have mentioned where he was supposed to go in accordance with the oracle. Furthermore Oedipous actually mentions that he will lie wherever his fate guides him, an ideal opportunity to explain what his fate was. Either then these lines are misplaced or they are spurious. To regard them as spurious explains why Antigone later on (line 1736) declares that Oedipous will die somewhere, without specifying where.

1706: *πύργος* is here used metaphorically, not with the meaning of "tower", but with the meaning of "refuge". The same use is found at Eur.Med.390.

1707: Poseidon was the main deity of Kolonos. He is mentioned here as *ἵππιος θεός*. This characterization of

Poseidon may be just another way of referring to him, but it may also carry an implication connected with Oedipous' family. Craik (1988) treats this connection as a counterbalance to the general connection of the family with wild beasts and especially colts.

1710-11: these lines resemble lines 103-5 at the beginning of the play. There Antigone was a young and innocent maiden who needed the help of an old slave in order to ascend the ladder. The situation is reversed here. Antigone is a mature woman, a heroine who supports and helps her old father.

1714-5: for Oedipous to walk, Antigone's help is essential, since he is blind. In this way the second line depends on the first, though syntactically there is asyndeton between them.

1717: *γέ* and *δῆτα* are found in the same sentence here. *Δῆτα* is the equivalent of *δή* (thus adding stress), while *γέ* acknowledges the word *ἄθλιά*.

1718-9: Oedipous is trying to walk and seeks Antigone's help. We would expect the future tense or even the subjunctive here, but the present indicative makes the description more vivid.

1721-2: the lines would make better sense with the imperative *τίθει* in place of the participle *τιθείς*, but this change alone would create a hiatus. It is worth, however, looking at the full MSS reading: *τῶδε τῶδε πόδα τίθει / πάτερ ὥστ' ὄνειρον ἰσχὺν ἔχων*. The metre of the second line (υυ-υ- / υυ-υ-, i.e. ia., doc.) is unusual, but not impossible. The simile used here reminds us of the way in which Oedipous

was presented when he first appeared on stage (lines 1543-5).

1724-5: it is difficult to make any sense of the MSS reading *ἐλαύνων*, even if Kreon is present on stage; the change to the exclamatory infinitive *ἐλαύνειν*, which works whether Kreon is present or not, seems to be required. Another problem that these lines present is the accusative *φυγάς*, which cannot easily be defined syntactically. Perhaps a dative *φυγαῖς* would be better. Then the meaning would be “to throw me, an old man, out of the country in a most unhappy exile”.

1726-7: this is a general statement, or gnomic saying, uttered by Antigone. A question-mark at the end would perhaps make a better point. In addition this sentence can be seen to be the third part of an asyndeton, the previous parts being questions, so that this part would be better as a question as well. Eteokles and Polyneikes have already been punished for their way of thinking and for their actions. Thus it is logical for Antigone to expect that Kreon will be punished as well by Dike for denying burial to Polyneikes and for sending Oedipous into exile. This technique of incorporating sayings in the text is common in tragedy and is also found in epic.

1732: the solution of the Sphinx’s riddle was a triumph in the beginning, but in the end it turned out to be a cause of shame for Oedipous and his family.

1736: Antigone now knows for certain that her father will not die in Thebes, since he is exiled. The relative *που* here could refer to Athens (Kolonos), which was mentioned

before (lines 1707-9) as the place where Oedipous will die, but if those lines are indeed spurious it remains vague.

1737: the idea expressed here is that friends miss each other when they are apart. That is why Antigone leaves behind “longing tears”, since she will not see her beloved friends again. This idea seems to be a common theme in many tragedies, for example it is also mentioned in S.Ant. (lines 803-4) and in S.El. (lines 805, 906 and 1313).

1738: it seems that only Euripides uses the epic word *ἀποπρό* in his lyrics (c.f. Eur.Or.1451).

1745-6: it is very strange, as Craik (1988) says, to see lyrics contradicting dialogue in tragedy. Furthermore, this is the last time that Antigone claims that she will bury her brother, which is a bit awkward if we consider that a few lines later she departs with Oedipous for exile. Perhaps she intends to bury her brother on her way to exile with her father (c.f. chapter three), but it is easier on the whole to regard these lines as spurious.

1747-9: it is strange to see Oedipous making these totally simple and natural suggestions to Antigone at the moment that he is facing his final and most serious downfall; thus many scholars (e.g. Kitto) suspect an interpolation here. It could be argued in support of the genuineness of these lines that Euripides is trying to make the departure natural and easy, as he did with Polyneikes' arrival at the beginning of the play (lines 274, 367-8). But even then line 1750 remains a problem, since we cannot explain the participle *ἔχουσι* . A possible solution would be to exchange line 1748 with line 1750: then the verb (*ἔχουσι*) would refer to

Antigone's friends, and the meaning of this part of the dialogue would be:

- go to see your friends;
- but they have had enough of my troubles;
- see to prayers at the altars;
- enough of my laments.

1751: the precinct mentioned here is dedicated to Semele and is situated either on Kithairon or more usually in the city of Thebes. This line reminds us of the second stasimon, where Dionysus along with Apollo and the joyless dance were mentioned for the first time (lines 784-833). Generally these lines seem awkward: the verb has been suppressed and *τε* does not seem to be in place. Denniston (1954) explains the use of the particle *τε* as an epic one, according to which it occurs in a relative clause of general reference.

1757: *χάριν ἀχάριτον* is yet one more oxymoron in this tragedy. The same one is found at Aesch.Cho.42 and at Aesch.Ag.1544. The participle *διδούσα* depends on an implied verb *ἴω* (understood from *ἴθι*) and makes a contrast between the past, when Antigone danced joyfully in honour of the gods, and now, when she will give a *χάριν ἀχάριτον* to them.

1758-63: these lines are extremely problematic. First of all Oedipus addresses the citizens of Thebes, though they are not even present (indeed it almost seems as if he is addressing the audience). Next though he starts talking about himself in the third person, suddenly in line 1760 he changes to the first person. Furthermore these lines show several similarities with S.OT.1524-5: the meaning of that

passage and this one is the same, in that the citizens of Thebes are called upon to see how wrecked Oedipous, who was able to solve the riddle and was a very great man, is now. Even the expressions that are used are similar (*Θήβης ἔνοικοι-κλεινῆς πολῖται; ἦδει-ἔγνω; and κράτιστος-μέγιστος*). Meredith (1937) tries to explain the above inconsistencies by characterizing Oedipous as crazy after all his misfortunes: he feels like a king more than ever just before his final disaster!!! Valk (1985) suggested deletion of line 1759, which solves only part of the problem.

1764-66: these lines occur also at the finale of Eur.Or. and Eur.I.T. Some critics, in view of this fact, condemn the lines as spurious. But it may be that tragedians used to choose certain stock lines as “cliches” for their finales. In addition, the invocation to Nike that ends the play is very ironical now that Oedipous' family is destroyed (c.f. section 2.1). As has already been mentioned, the prayer by the Chorus could be considered as their expression of hope of winning in the competition with this tragedy, and it seems that this explanation is more likely.

CHAPTER THREE
UNITY AND INCONSISTENCY
IN THE EXODOS



As has already been mentioned, the “Phoenician Women” of Euripides is another “good” example of interpolation and corruption in ancient Greek texts. This phenomenon is logically expected in view of the journey of ancient Greek literature -especially drama- through the centuries, although of course most of the major corruptions took place in the first hundred years (c.f. chapter one). In this specific tragedy interpolation -appearing in the form of textual problems and inconsistencies- was observed in two sections, namely the *teichosopia* (lines 88-201) (c.f. chapter one) and the *Exodos* (lines 1307-1767). We have already dealt with the difficulties that the text of the *Exodos* presents (c.f. chapter two). In this chapter we are going to try to solve the most general and serious problem one faces with the *Exodos*, i.e. how Antigone can bury Polyneikes, her brother, and at the same time follow Oedipous, her father, into exile.

In the eyes of the contemporary spectators this play could have given the impression of a chronicle, an account of the history of Thebes from its foundation by Kadmos to the final downfall of the royal house, when Oedipous -the tragic king- departs for exile, after his two sons, Eteokles and Polyneikes and his wife Iokaste, who was his mother as well, died. In fact the “episodia” of the play deal with the present situation of the city, while the previous parts of its history are dealt with mostly in the choral odes. But, as Podlecki (1962) observed, the poet cleverly uses a device to unify the whole tragedy: four motifs, which are more

prominent in the choral odes, appear constantly in the whole play. Therefore let us take a look first at how these motifs connect the concluding part with the rest of the play.

The motifs are:

- a] Light-Dark (sight-blindness);
- b] Beasts against Thebes;
- c] Oedipous Καλλίνικος;
- d] The Joyless Dance (music);

a] Light-Dark (sight-blindness)

Light is associated with life, happiness and victory, and dark with sad events such as war, death, loss of light and Oedipous' blindness. The motif appears in this play in two ways: either light and dark are contrasted with each other, or they are used to create an oxymoron, indicating how light can end up being dark or how something appearing happy, turns out to be sad. At the very beginning of the play the ray that the Sun directed to Thebes (light), when it was founded, was unlucky in view of the subsequent history of the city (lines 4-5). This is not yet a clear oxymoron, but rather an image, implying the oxymoron that will develop later on in the play. This image appears clearly in the concluding scene as well. It is not at all coincidental that there, where the description of the disaster of the royal family reaches its most important moment, references to dark and blindness are more prominent, usually describing either Oedipous' blindness (lines 1616, 1686, 1691, 1699, 1708) or the three deaths that take place (lines 1339, 1484, 1553). Especially in lines

1539-45 the contrast between light and dark is explicit, through the appearance of the blind Oedipous in the light outside the palace where he was kept. Furthermore, in lines 1546-8 death and blindness are compared, when Antigone announces to her father that his sons and his wife no longer see the light, i.e. they are dead. Light and dark are contrasted in the Parodos, where the Chorus describe their beauty (light) (lines 220-1), and then mention Dionysus' fires (also light) (lines 226-8), but immediately afterwards dark or rather a different kind of light comes with the presence outside the walls of Ares, who inflames bloodshed and a cloud around the city (lines 241, 250-1). In the first stasimon the birth of Dionysos and his dance, which is happy, but is described also as *κατάσκιος* (lines 649-56), is contrasted with the dragon, Ares' guardian, which ravaged the land and was responsible for the death of the first Thebans, and yet in the text is associated with sight (lines 660-1, 671) and light (line 674).¹

Euripides is a well-known "technician" of irony and oxymoron and this is clearly shown in his use of this motif, which appears constantly during the play and not only constitutes an element of unity, but conveys irony in such a clever way, since light is never simply light but most of the time it is actually dark, and furthermore words connected with light are often used to describe unfortunate events (e.g. the dragon, Ares) and viceversa. In addition, it should be noticed that the stress is on light alone in the

¹ The motif appears in other parts of the tragedy as well, but here emphasis is given to the opening and closing scenes.

earlier parts of the tragedy, where the early history of the house is described (including unfortunate events) but towards the final part of the play, where the blind Oedipous is presented, this theme develops into the light/dark contrast.

b] Beasts against Thebes

Beasts is another motif that appears regularly in the tragedy. It seems that Thebes has suffered from beasts ever since its foundation. First of all Io is mentioned as the common origin of Thebans and Phoenicians, her bestial nature being based on the reference to her horns (line 248 in the parodos, lines 828-9 in the second stasimon). Then is mentioned the dragon which guarded the water of Dirke and which Kadmos killed, and by casting its teeth he “gave birth” to the first Thebans, who killed each other for the first time. The dragon is mentioned in the parodos for the first time (line 232), in the first stasimon (lines 657-68), in the second stasimon (lines 818-21) and in the third stasimon (lines 1062-6). The dragon is also connected with Menoikeus’ sacrifice (lines 1010-1).

The most well-known monster, connected not only with the history of Thebes but more specifically with Oedipous’ glory and shame, is the Sphinx, whose riddle Oedipous solved to become king of the city. The Sphinx appears very early in the prologue, in Iokaste’s monologue (lines 45-50), in the second stasimon (lines 806-11) and in the third stasimon (lines 1018-50). She appears also in the concluding part of the tragedy, mainly associated with

Oedipous' shame, since only after Oedipous solved her riddle did he become king of Thebes and marry his mother Iokaste (lines 1353, 1688-9, 1732, 1759-60).

Beasts appear also in the emblems on the shields of the Argive army during its description by the messenger (lines 1108, 1120-1, 1135-8).

Apart from these literal uses, beasts appear in this tragedy metaphorically: the two fighting brothers are compared to two fighting beasts. Thebes now -after the dragon and the Sphinx have been killed- is threatened by two new animals, namely Eteokles and Polyneikes. In lines 263-4 (where Polyneikes is presented as afraid of being caught in a net) and at line 699 (where Kreon "hunts" for Eteokles) this metaphor is implied; later on, in lines 1380-1 and 1573-4 it is clearly established. It is not at all a coincidence that the connection of the history of Thebes with the dragon and the Sphinx (the literal use of the motif) appears mainly in the choral odes of the play, while the two royal "beasts" (the metaphorical use) appear in the concluding scene. In this respect the Chorus not only works as a neutral spectator (c.f. chapter one), but as an integral unifying force within the play as well.

Euripides cleverly uses this theme in his drama. By his use of it he succeeds in connecting all the elements of Thebes' past with the present situation, thus presenting its history as a whole. As has already been mentioned, the city has been suffering from beasts from its foundation right up to the present (hence the metaphorical presentation of the two brothers). From another point of view, the present war

with the Argives can be seen as the outcome of the very first murder of the dragon: the dragon was an Ares-appointed guardian, and now the god seeks satisfaction for its death. That is how Menoikeus' sacrifice, which has been considered as a totally irrelevant event by many scholars, is integrated in the play, since he must be sacrificed exactly where the dragon was killed. In this way also the contrast between Menoikeus and the two royal brothers is emphasized, since the first one appeased the original beast (the dragon), while the other two are still beasts.

c] Oedipous Καλλίνικος

Euripides borrows the language that is normally used for athletics to present the "victory" of Oedipous, which in actual fact ended in complete disaster. Oedipous solved the riddle of the Sphinx and gained a glorious victory, but at the same moment he married his mother, even though he became king of Thebes (lines 1048-9, 1728-9). Later on when the truth came to light, he laid a curse on his sons. In this way he made them start a conflict, a *μυσαρόν ἀγῶνα* (lines 1052-4, 1354-5). Though they tried to avoid it, they ended up fighting with each other. The same type of vocabulary is used in the description of the duel of Eteokles and Polyneikes (lines 1407-8). Each one of them prayed to win a glorious crown, to set up a victorious trophy, and to win (lines 780, 1251, 1369, 1374). Unfortunately in the end all they accomplished was a life-struggle (line 1330). Although the city was saved and in this respect the conflict was successful, the royal brothers died, so that their conflict

turned out most unhappily. Again by this motif, as by the previous one, Oedipous (lines 1046-59) and his sons are contrasted with Menoikeus, who sacrificed himself to save the city and though he died he made the city *καλλίνικος* (lines 1054-9).

This motif is another good example of Euripides' sense of irony and oxymoron: an apparent victory never does end up as a real victory, either for Oedipous, who reached the highest glory and the highest shame on the same day, or for his sons, who fought for what they thought would be victory, but in the end died. This idea is accurately presented by the use of athletic language in various parts in the play, and again it creates an important sense of unity.

d] The joyless dance (music)

Generally the dance is supposed to be an act of happiness and joy; but in this play of Euripides the dance appears to be connected with sorrow, misfortunes and war. The song is connected with the Sphinx, whose singing riddle was disastrous for Thebes (lines 807, 1506-7). The Bacchic dance of Dionysos is presented in the parodos (lines 235-6) and immediately afterwards is contrasted with the presence of Ares (who of course is not dancing); in the first stasimon this dance of the Theban girls appears again (lines 655-6), and in the third stasimon it is presented as a characteristic that does not belong to Ares (lines 784-7), though afterwards he does in fact lead a dance not accompanied by the playing of flutes (line 791). Iokaste feels like dancing when she sees Polyneikes, but this is only temporarily a

moment of joy in the present situation, since Ares (war) is outside the walls (lines 316-7). The same sense of joyless dance appears in the Exodos as well: Antigone is lamenting like a Bacchant of the dead (lines 1489-91, 1498-9). Bacchic dance, connected with Dionysos, is normally a happy and even deliriously happy, event; but for Antigone now it is a way of mourning for her dead brothers and her dead mother. Towards the end she mentions that once she danced for the gods giving a real service, but now her dance is unhappy and does not offer a service (lines 1754-7). In this tragedy even the dance appears to be not an act of joy and happiness, as it normally would be (especially if it were Bacchic dance), but an act connected with disaster, mourning and death through its connection with Ares and war. Thus this motif, like all the previous ones, is a very good example of Euripides' technique of conveying irony in his plays. Furthermore, it seems that all these motifs are interconnected by being based on the same kind of contrast and oxymoron, i.e. in all of them we see something which is normally good (e.g. light, victory, dance) presented as something completely disastrous and unhappy (dark, death, exile, joyless dance).

Apart from these motifs that Euripides uses to unify the play by implying the irony of the whole situation, there is another clever device which is apparent after a comparison of the opening and the concluding scene, namely a kind of "cycle" composition. It seems that two of the parts of the opening scene, Iokaste's narration in the Prologue (lines 19-87) and her monody greeting Polyneikes (lines

301-53) bear great similarities to Oedipous' speech (lines 1595-1624) and Antigone's dirge (lines 1485-1538) (c.f. chapter two).

Thus one cannot deny that by all the above means Euripides succeeds in presenting a coherent tragedy from the very beginning to the very end. But still one main inconsistency remains unexplained: Antigone's actions at the end of the play. As the text stands, Antigone follows Oedipous, her father, into exile. In the light of previous parts of the play this finale is expected. From the very beginning of the play we hear about Oedipous' misfortunes from the moment he was born. In fact he himself repeats his tragic story (lines 1595-1624), emphasizing the fact that he was condemned even before he was born (lines 1595-9)². In the Exodos he is described as an old and blind man, completely incapable of surviving without somebody's help. His "stick" and "support" used to be Iokaste while she was alive (lines 1532-45, 1615-7, 1710-5). Much earlier in the tragedy, when Teiresias comes on the stage, he also is a blind old man, but his daughter is accompanying him and is taking care of him (lines 834-44). In that passage we are informed how children are expected to behave to their old parents and actually in the Exodos Antigone accepts this responsibility and decides to accompany her destroyed father (lines 1679, 1710-2). Another similarity between the

² Certain lines of this speech are spurious and should be deleted (c.f. chapter two), but this does not affect the speech as a whole.

two scenes, i.e. the Teiresias and the Oedipous ones, that makes the responsibility referred to even more prominent, is the use of nautical imagery in both of them (c.f. chapter two).

One could, of course, deny that Antigone also takes the responsibility of burying her brother Polyneikes, whom Kreon has ordered to be left unburied (lines 1657, 1661, 1745-6). If one considers the burial motif from another perspective, this can easily be explained: Antigone's decision to bury Polyneikes, despite the strict prohibitions, was a very well-known aspect of the Theban cycle, especially after Sophocles' "Antigone", the tragedy which dealt exclusively with it (c.f. chapter one). Euripides could simply have avoided including it in his tragedy, but in a way he should not have, since the contemporary audience would expect at least some reference to it in a tragedy which presents so many aspects of Theban history. Eteokles included the prohibition of Polyneikes' burial inside Thebes in his orders to Kreon before the duel with his brother (lines 774-7); Polyneikes asked specifically to be buried inside his fatherland before he died (lines 1447-9); and Kreon informs Antigone and Oedipous about Eteokles' order (lines 1627-46). Kreon is accused of pressing the truth for his own sake in this speech (c.f. chapter two), and though he does not actually lie about the denial of Polyneikes' burial, he certainly distorts Eteokles' order, since he is the first one who says that Polyneikes should not be buried anywhere and not just inside Thebes. Thus Antigone is expected to react against this order and she does. A big debate on the

subject follows between her and Kreon, towards the end of which she modifies her resolve to just bathing the body (line 1667), or placing bandages around his wounds (line 1669), or even just kissing his lips (line 1671). She does not achieve any of these, and immediately she announces her decision to break her engagement with Haemon, threatening that she will even kill him if she is forced to marry him (lines 1673-5). The breaking of the engagement can be seen as a (clever) device that Euripides uses to free Antigone so that she can depart with her father. In this way Euripides manages to include this traditional motif in his tragedy. One should not deprive him of his right to treat the myth as he wants, and it seems that Antigone's departure with her father is natural and well-prepared by the poet in the course of the play. One of course should not fail to see that what will happen finally with Polyneikes' corpse remains vague. In addition, Antigone seems to abandon one family duty (to bury her brother) for another (to follow her father). But, as Conacher (1967) believes (c.f. chapter two), the breaking of her engagement with Haemon and her threat to kill him covers her possible loss of face.

One small problem still remains: Antigone repeats her decision to bury her brother just before the close of the play (lines 1745-6). But these two lines belong to a longer passage (lines 1744-63) which is suspected of being spurious (c.f. chapter two), so that these two lines are probably spurious as well.

A scholar could still accuse Euripides of leaving unanswered the question of what will happen to Polyneikes'

corpse. One answer could be that the poet is not interested in foreshadowing this specific matter in this play, and so he does not deal with it. One may be tempted to assume that Antigone will take the body of Polyneikes with her so that she can bury it outside the city. In that way Polyneikes' corpse would not be left completely dishonoured, though his specific request was to be buried inside Thebes. Unfortunately, as the text stands, this assumption seems very unlikely and even subjective. Many scholars (e.g. Friedrich, 1939) tried to solve this problem by removing all references to the burial. But this would involve deletion of large parts of the text, especially the majority of Antigone's stichomythia with Kreon, and there is not always sufficient justification for doing so.

Perhaps there is no point in trying to answer the above question. It is true that textual critics nowadays are capable of deciding to what extent the ancient Greek texts that have reached us today are genuine, by basing their inquiry on syntactical, grammatical and stylistic criteria, and also on the degree of relevance of the passage they are examining to the rest of the work. But they should always be cautious not to assume too many things following their "instincts", since in the end they will never be able to read the mind of the person who once wrote the play.

APPENDIX

LINES 1104-1140¹

Lines 1104-40 are part of the messenger's speech which is found at the beginning of the 4th episode (lines 1067-1284). The messenger, after mentioning Menoikeus' sacrifice, goes on to describe the battle between the Thebans and the Argives and the seven leaders of the Argive army who are going to attack the seven gates of the Theban wall. In the lines we are interested in, the messenger describes the seven attackers according to the gate they are going to attack, basing his description on their shield-emblems. Then he goes on to describe the battle step-by-step.

This passage has often been attacked as an interpolation, not only because of the textual problems and the strange style it presents, but also because of its place and its relevance to the rest of the tragedy.

The main textual problem that the passage presents was first noticed by Paley (1860). In lines 1116-8 Hippomedon's shield is described as having Panoptes (= Argos) as an emblem. According to mythology, Argos was a many eyed herdsman who acted as guardian of Io, following Hera's orders. He managed to be a good guardian by having some eyes open during the day and others during the night. These lines, although they intend to give this description, fail because:

¹ All the references and the authors mentioned in this Appendix can be found in detail in Mastronarde (1978).

- a] the two participles (*βλέποντα*, and *κρύπτοντα*) are grammatically ambiguous: they may be either masculine-singular or as neuter-plural. Apart from this ambiguity, the main difficulty is that they fail to describe two different sets of eyes, as they should, but describe just one set which opens in the morning and closes at night;
- b] the phrases *σύν ἄστρον ἐπιτολαῖσιν* and *ἄστρον δυνόντων μέτα* do not bear the required temporal sence, since the use of the prepositions *σύν* and *μέτα* in the sense of *ἅμα* is unparalleled according to Paley (1860);
- c] line 1118 makes no sense, since there seems to be no reason why one could observe Panoptes' two sets of eyes after his death;
- d] a careless repetition of *ὄμμασιν -ὄμματα* is evident in lines 1115-6.

The same textual problem was noticed by Pearson (1909) and Craik (1988), who even marks these lines. Mastronarde (1978) tried to solve this problem. For him the two participles (a]) must be neuter-plural to agree with the noun *ὄμματα*, which is added as an explanatory noun for the participles. The intransitive use of the verb *κρύπτω* is paralleled at S.OT.968 and S.Ai. 635. Thus the participles are explained as a loose apposition to *Πανόπτην δεδορκότα*, or as an accusativus pendens in asyndeton explicativum. Against this it should be noticed that this appears to be a very loose apposition, and that this whole explanation seems strained. Though Mastronarde tries to explain the grammatical form of the participles, he does not solve the real problem they present. A possible alteration in the text that would solve

the grammatical problem would be to change *τά.....ῥμματα* (line 1116) to the dative, thus giving the meaning: “watching with some eyes at the rising of the stars, and closing others at their setting”; but the other problems still remain.

Mastronarde goes on to explain the problem of the single set of eyes by arguing that the passage is not trying to describe two specific moments, sunset and sunrise, but is referring to a continuous process, during which the stars rise and set, and some eyes open and others close, following the movement of the stars. This explanation seems very far-fetched.

Finally, Mastronarde does not give any answer to the question of *σύν* and *μέτα* (b)], to the problem of line 1118 (c)] or to the repetition in lines 1115-6 (d)].

Another textual problem that Pearson (1909) noticed is to be found in lines 1120-2, where Tydeus is presented. Tydeus appears to have a lionskin on his shield and to hold a torch in his right hand “like Prometheus”. Tydeus’ representative, however, should be the boar, not the lion, since in his fight with Polyneikes he is always represented, for whatever reason, as the boar (c.f. line 411, Stat.Theb.1.482ff.). Besides, a lionskin can be used as a wrapping (e.g. Homer. ILIAD.K.23), but definitely not as a natural blazon. Furthermore, the identification of Tydeus with the Titan Prometheus, even in a metaphorical sense, is bold, since Tydeus appears to be small in size and it is unlikely that he would enter a real battle with a torch as a weapon. Of course one could argue that Prometheus holding

a torch appears as an emblem on the warrior's shield (at Aesch.Septem.432-3 Kapaneus is described with such an emblem on his shield), but since the lionskin must be a wrapping for the shield (see above) the actual emblem on the shield would not be visible.

Mastronarde (1978) explains this passage as follows: the lionskin is a cover on Tydeus' shield indicating ferocity and valour; δεξιᾷ δέ can then only refer to Tydeus' right hand. Tydeus is holding a torch in his right hand and in this respect only he is identified metaphorically with *Τιτάν Προμηθεύς* (an appositional nominative), since Prometheus was connected with torch-bearers in Athenian culture and we often find him in such metaphors (Pindar.P.4.289, Eur.Ion.455). This seems to be a quite difficult explanation, but in favour of it it could be added that perhaps Euripides is again trying to change the myth and present Tydeus not as the small fellow of Aeschylus, but as a big man, by comparing him to Prometheus.

Two repetitions are obvious in this passage, creating further difficulties, i.e.:

a) line 1136 is tautologous with line 1135. Both Craik (1988) and Mastronarde (1978) delete it, and Craik even adds that line 1136 is feebler in description, besides containing the word *βραχίουσιν*, which is a strange use of the plural for a singular part of the body.

b) the phrase *καί πρώτα μὲν* is repeated in lines 1104 and 1141, prompting Morus (1771) to delete the whole passage, since line 1141 can immediately follow line 1103. Mastronarde (1978), however, points out that the phrase

καί πρῶτα μὲν in line 1141 is used to indicate two different stages of the battle, the second being marked at line 1143 by *δέ* + temporal *ὡς* clause. The same use of the phrase is found at Eur.Ba.1096 and Aesch.Pers.412. The phrase in line 1104 has a completely different use: it indicates that the messenger will start an enumeration, and that is why a *δέ* accompanies each gate, when the messenger mentions it. In addition, this is quite a common phrase and its repetition should not immediately be treated as indicating an interpolation.

The above textual problems have led many scholars to accuse the language of the passage of being frigid and un-Euripidean (c.f. Morus (1771), Powell (1911), Fraenkel (1963)). Furthermore, they saw the length of this speech -including these lines- as unexpectedly long; but this length is characteristic of late Euripides (e.g. Ba.1043-1152, Ion.1122-1228), and is not a convincing argument for interpolation.

Inconsistencies, repetitions and irrelevance in comparison to the rest of the tragedy were also noticed. Naber (1882) followed by Wecklein (1894) and Friedrich (1939) decided that this passage is an interpolation, because it contains a repetition of the *teichoscopia* (lines 88-201). For Mastrorade (1978) the passage just bears similarities to the *teichoscopia*. First of all the authenticity of the *teichoscopia* has also been questioned (c.f. chapter one). Even if one decides to accept the *teichoscopia*, one must admit that two passages may appear similar, but may be fulfilling different purposes. The description of the Argives

there is lyric and informal; no attention is paid to any topographical sense in their presentation. This happens because the only reason for the existence of that passage is to show the effect of the danger on Antigone and in this way to develop her characterization. But here the heroes are described in greater detail and at the same length, and are presented in strict topographical order, following the order of the gates. The purpose of this passage is to give some helpful information for the following narrative description of the battle. On the other hand this passage presupposes gate-by-gate attack, whereas the actual description of the battle is not done strictly gate-by-gate.

Inconsistency was noticed by Naber (1882) between this passage and the criticism of Aeschylus (he perceives it as such) in lines 751-2, made through the mouth of Eteokles. It is illogical for Euripides to mention Aeschylus' mistake in "Seven against Thebes" and then repeat it himself a short time later. But it is not at all certain that Euripides criticizes Aeschylus in lines 751-2 for his detailed description of the Argive army in his tragedy. The two tragedies use a completely different means of handling the myth (c.f. chapter one): in Aeschylus the whole tragedy is based on this description, while Euripides just uses it to add helpful information. The whole messenger's speech creates a dramatic pause for Iokaste and the audience before the news of the duel breaks out, as Mastronarde (1978) argues. In addition, Eteokles' words in those lines do not really apply now that the battle is over, because then the battle had not yet started, and everybody was concerned only

with it. Furthermore, imitation of Aeschylus is not evident. Probably the description here is based on the information given by Aeschylus, but the Argive army is presented differently in the two plays: the gates and the attackers are presented in a completely different order, gates and attackers are combined differently, and even the names of one gate and one warrior are different (c.f. chapter one).

Wecklein (1894) saw another inconsistency, which does not seem to be a real one. Adrastos appears as one of the attackers at line 1134, though he is referred to as the commander-in-chief of the army at line 1187. In fact, there is nothing illogical about this. The king of Argos will simply supervise the retreat.

The place of the speech is awkward for Walter (1888). It follows Menoikeus' sacrifice; therefore Euripides should have made a detailed description of that event and not just a brief reference as in lines 1090-2. Against this it should be noted, as Mastronarde (1978) does, that in the third stasimon the case of Menoikeus' sacrifice was closed, and it only comes up again when Kreon appears (line 1310), again without details. Thus there is no need to have a detailed description. Besides, the only reason why Euripides includes this story is to make the characterization of the two royal brothers more prominent through their comparison with Menoikeus and to show Thebes' history as a series of continuous events, since Menoikeus has to be sacrificed where the dragon was once killed, in order to satisfy Ares (c.f. chapter three).

The main argument that Mastronarde (1978) uses to support this passage is its relevance to the rest of the tragedy and specifically to the following description of the battle. Euripides wanted to present more than one theme in this play. In the choral odes mainly, where the poet continually presents Thebes' previous history, we can see that one of the themes he had in mind was to show that the city was always in danger for different reasons, but in one way or the other she was always saved (e.g. lines 202-62, 784-800, 931-52 and 1067-1207). In this passage the glamorous Argive army is presented through the emblems of the warriors' shields, thus emphasizing the danger that Thebes faces this time. Seen in this light, the passage is not at all irrelevant for him. Against this it should be noted that when the messenger's speech is uttered, the battle has finished and Thebes' victory is obvious (lines 1081-2). Thus one could see the emphasis as being on the victory of the city and the contrast of that with the deaths of Eteokles, Polyneikes and Iokaste (e.g. lines 1067-89). The description of the heroes at this point may make the difficulty of the victory more prominent, but it also stands in the way of the above mentioned contrast. Furthermore, the information the spectator would get from this passage may be helpful for the following description of the battle, but it is not necessary, as Mastronarde believes. For him the audience, without this passage, would have to assume the division of the attacking army and the topography of the battle (including the position of Tydeus and Polyneikes), and certain lines would remain unclear (e.g. lines 1153-86, 1141

and 1187). On the other hand, the gate-by-gate attack may be presupposed in some lines, as we have already mentioned, but generally it remains secondary, since the whole description of the battle does not follow a gate-by-gate process.

We have seen that the passage cannot be condemned as an obvious repetition of the teichoscopia or as a clear imitation of Aeschylus. The inconsistencies that some scholars find (e.g. Adrastos' position, Eteokles' words in lines 751-2) can be easily explained. On the other hand certain textual problems remain unsolved (lines 1116-8), but that does not in itself indicate that the whole passage is spurious. The big question and criterion for the genuineness of the passage then is the way in which it is connected to the rest of the play and the role it plays in it, which does not appear to be an important one. Of course the answer to this question is a very subjective one, since it depends entirely on how each scholar perceives the passage.

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