CANADIAN THESES

THÈSES CANADIENNES

NOTICE

The quality of this microfiche is heavily dependent upon the quality of the original thesis submitted for microfilming. Every effort has been made to ensure the highest quality of reproduction possible.

If pages are missing, contact the university which granted the degree.

Some pages may have indistinct print especially if the original pages were typed with a poor typewriter ribbon or if the university sent us an inferior photocopy.

Previously copyrighted materials (journal articles, published tests, etc.) are not filmed.

Reproduction in full or in part of this film is governed by the Canadian Copyright Act, R.S.C. 1970, c. C-30. Please read the authorization forms which accompany this thesis.

AVIS

La qualité de cette microfiche dépend grandement de la qualité de la thèse soumise au microfilmage. Nous avons tout fait pour assurer une qualité supérieure de reproduction.

S'il manque des pages, veuillez communiquer avec l'université qui a conféré le grade.

La qualité d'impression de certaines pages peut laisser à désirer, surtout si les pages originales ont été dactylographiées à l'aide d'un ruban usé ou si l'université nous a fait parvenir une photocopie de qualité inférieure.

Les documents qui font déjà l'objet d'un droit d'auteur (articles de revue, examens publiés, etc.) ne sont pas microfilmés.

La reproduction, même partielle, de ce microfilm est soumise à la Loi canadienne sur le droit d'auteur, SRC 1970, c. C-30. Veuillez prendre connaissance des formules d'autorisation qui accompagnent cette thèse.

THIS DISSERTATION
HAS BEEN MICROFILMED
EXACTLY AS RECEIVED

LA THÈSE A ÉTÉ
MICROFILMÉE TELLE QUE
NOUS L'AVONS REÇUE

NL 339 (r. 86/01)

Canada

National Library of Canada
Bibliothèque nationale du Canada

Canadian Theses Division
Division des thèses canadiennes

Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0N4

PERMISSION TO MICROFILM — AUTORISATION DE MICROFILMER

• Please print or type — Écrire en lettres moulées ou dactylographier

Full Name of Author — Nom complet de l'auteur

MELVIN DANIEL THOMAS

Date of Birth — Date de naissance
26/08/52

Country of Birth — Lieu de naissance
Canada

Permanent Address — Résidence fixe
#1604 - 1075 Comox St
Vancouver, B.C.
V6E 1K2

Title of Thesis — Titre de la thèse
KEMMOI and KOMMATIC FORMS:
A STUDY OF THE BIPARTITE
LYRICS OF AESCHYLUS

University — Université
University of Alberta

Degree for which thesis was presented — Grade pour lequel cette thèse fut présentée
M.A.

Year this degree conferred — Année d'obtention de ce grade
1983

Name of Supervisor — Nom du directeur de thèse
DR. R.M. NIELSEN

Permission is hereby granted to the NATIONAL LIBRARY OF CANADA to microfilm this thesis and to lend or sell copies of the film.

The author reserves other publication rights, and neither the thesis nor extensive extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's written permission.

L'autorisation est, par la présente, accordée à la BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE DU CANADA de microfilmer cette thèse et de prêter ou de vendre des exemplaires du film.

L'auteur se réserve les autres droits de publication; ni la thèse ni de longs extraits de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans l'autorisation écrite de l'auteur.

Date
5/10/83

Signature

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

KOMMOI AND KOMMATIC FORMS

A STUDY OF THE BIPARTITE LYRICS OF AESCHYLUS

by

MELVIN DANIEL THOMAS

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

OF MASTER OF ARTS

IN

CLASSICS

DEPARTMENT OF CLASSICS

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

 FALL 1983

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

RELEASE FORM

NAME OF AUTHOR ..... MELVIN DANIEL THOMAS .....

TITLE OF THESIS ..... KOMMOI AND KOMMATIC FORMS .....

A STUDY OF THE BIPARTITE LYRICS OF AESCHYLUS .....

DEGREE FOR WHICH THESIS WAS PRESENTED ..... MA .....

YEAR THIS DEGREE GRANTED ..... 1983 .....

Permission is hereby granted to THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA LIBRARY to reproduce single copies of this thesis and to lend or sell such copies for private, scholarly or scientific research purposes only.

The author reserves other publication rights, and neither the thesis nor extensive extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's written permission.

(Signed) .....

PERMANENT ADDRESS:

#1604 - 1075 Comox St.,

Vancouver, B.C.

DATED .. May 9 .. 1983 .....

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled KOMMOI AND KOMMATIC FORMS - A STUDY OF THE BIPARTITE LYRICS OF AESCHYLUS

submitted by MELVIN DANIEL THOMAS

in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

Rosemary M. Nielsen
supervisor

Date May 9, 1983

This work is dedicated

to my parents

in gratitude for their support through the years,

and to the memory of my friend,

Patrick H. Spelliscy,

whose abiding love of the drama,

and unfailing friendship and encouragement

are deeply missed.

Atque in perpetuum, frater, ave atque vale.

And unto eternity, brother, hail and farewell.
(Catullus CI, 10)

Abstract

Aeschylus, the first European dramatist whose works have survived, was a daring and innovative craftsman who raised tragedy to a level from which he has influenced the form and history of drama to the present day. We believe we may find in the lyric interaction between the Chorus and the actors of his dramas some indication of Aeschylus' innovative technique.

These lyric exchanges were later called "kommoi" by Aristotle, a term which implies a theme or mood of lamentation. It has been thought that perhaps in the bipartite lamentations there exists the essential germinal element of tragedy. This theory seems worthy of analysis, especially since there are in the tragedies of Aeschylus some bipartite compositions which are not threnodic in nature. We attempt to discover whether these exceptions are indications of innovation away from accepted dramatic practice or are the marks of a genius exploring a form which was the natural result of the dramatic conventions of his day.

The thesis examines the seventeen bipartite passages in the tragedies of Aeschylus in relation to their dramatic situation, their metrics and their overall dramatic effect. The form lends itself to use in situations of high emotional intensity, at points of crisis and climax, as elements of character development and foreshadowing and in the creation of scenes which are elevated from our general concept of life as portrayed in drama.

The thesis concludes that the theatrical nature of these passages indicates the attempt of Aeschylus to exploit a situation that involves a chorus and an actor in order to achieve specific dramatic effects. As an early dramatist Aeschylus was not bound to observe conventional uses for his lyric forms. Rather, it is the mark of his genius that he could employ the kommatic form in certain exceptional and unconventional uses, ones which were later abandoned by his successors as the role of the chorus decreased. The thesis therefore concludes that there is reason to suppose that Aristotle's attempt to define the kommos in terms of content was based on observations pertinent to later tragedies and dramatists and, moreover, that the belief that the bipartite lamentation was germinal to tragedy is erroneous.

Acknowledgement

I wish to thank Dr. Rosemary Nielsen for her aid, guidance and encouragement in the preparation of this thesis.

I wish also to acknowledge my debt of gratitude to Dr. B.L. Harris, whose encouragement, friendship and faith have been crucial to the completion of this work.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

THE LIFE OF AESCHYLUS

Few facts about the life of Aeschylus can be advanced with any certainty. The "Αἰσχύλου Βιός" (Life of Aeschylus) appended to the Medicean manuscript appears to date from the tenth or eleventh century [1] and repeats episodes which seem to be merely traditional.

Aristophanes' Frogs provides the most nearly contemporary depiction of Aeschylus which has survived. Herodotus refers to the death of the poet's brother, Cunegeirus, at the battle of Marathon [2] and although the death was an outstanding act of heroism, the inclusion was probably as much the result of an interest in Aeschylus as the desire to record an individual act of bravery.

The date of Aeschylus' birth given in the "Bios" is certainly corrupt and a general assumption is made in favour of the year 525/4. Lattimore [3] suggests that this is suspect since it coincides too exactly with the known Greek habit of dating back forty years from an important event (in this case Aeschylus' first victory in 484) [4] and that it is "unlikely that a man who utterly eclipsed his rivals... should have had to wait so long before scoring his first success" [5]. The Parian Marble states that he died in Sicily during the archonship of Callias (456/5) [6]. This date at least may reasonably be accepted. Suidas says that he was forty-seven at his death but since this would make Aeschylus only thirteen at the time of Marathon and thus too young to fight, it seems probable that Hermann's emendation of fifty-seven is more accurate [7]. This would provide a birth date in 513/2.

Aeschylus was born in the last quarter of the sixth century and died at the height of the Pentecontaetia. It is the events that were taking place at this time which are important to our discussion of the art of Aeschylus.

Aeschylus lived during a time of great political and intellectual activity, a time which achieved greater positive effects on European culture than any other until the Rennaissance almost two thousand years later. His youth saw the overthrow of the Peisistratid tyranny and the emergence and development of democracy at Athens. His early manhood witnessed the repulse and termination of Persian aspirations against the Greek mainland. The crucial role played by Athens in this must have seemed a vindication of democracy and clearly established Aeschylus' city as a major power.

In art the stiff formalism of the Archaic Period was giving way to the idealized naturalism of the Classical Age. Abstract Philosophy was beginning to analyse the relations of man to the universe and his gods. Literature was also undergoing changes. Prose and the writing of history were emerging as recognized genres. And in drama perhaps fifty years [8] had passed since Thespis introduced the first actor (protagonist).

Gilbert Murray holds that in three respects Aeschylus deserves to be called the "Creator of Tragedy".

> First, his gift of Semnotēs, bringing greatness or majesty where it was not before; next, his bold experimentation in stage technique... and thirdly, his intellectual vividness as a thinker stirred by great ideas. [9]

Aristotle tells us that tragedy started "from little myths and laughable diction" and did not "assume majesty" until late [10].

This majesty (σεμνότης) is an element of Aeschylean drama which has been noted since Aristophanes:

> ἀλλ' ὦ πρῶτος τῶν Ἑλλήνων πυργώσας ῥήματα σεμνά
>
> Oh, thou first of the Greeks who built majestic words into towers. (Frogs, 1004)

Aeschylus was noted for the majesty of his diction, the metaphors, the paraphrases and lengthy compounds which seem to come more from the epic tradition then the lyric. Quintilian observes with some justification,

> Trageodias primus in lucem Aeschylus protulit, sublimis et gravis et grandilocus saepe ad vitium...
>
> Aeschylus first brought forth tragedies into light, sublime and weighty and grandiloquent often to the point of vice.... 11

This sublimity and weightiness are as much a part of Aeschylus' majesty as the diction he employed. It indicates the fact that he bestowed on the "little myths" a grandeur that they had not attained previously.

> μόνον γὰρ ζηλοῖ τὸ βάρος περιτιθέναι τοῖς προσώποις, ἀρχαῖον εἶναι κρίνων τὸ μεγαλοπρεπές τε καὶ ἡρωικόν, τὸ δὲ πανοῦργον κομψοπρετές τε καὶ γνωμολογικὸν ἀλλοτριὸν τῆς τραγωιδίας ἡγούμενος.
>
> For he alone was eager to bestow weight upon the personae, judging what was magnificent and heroic to be innate and believing that what was villainous was affectation and that pithy speech was foreign to tragedy. 12

Aeschylus was also an innovator. Aristotle credits him with the introduction of the second actor [13]. This alone was a great advancement for drama since it enabled the situation to change and the plot to move. New information could be introduced as happens in Persae when the messenger announces the defeat of the Persian forces and when Darius forecasts the battle of Plataea. The situation changes in

Septem when the spy reveals the disposition of the enemy leaders and inexorably Eteocles eliminates his other champions until only he himself can stand against his brother. The protagonist is thus set in opposition to the movement of plot; Eteocles has a choice, on six separate occasions, but because of his character and the choices he has already made, he must, in the end, choose to stand against Polyneices.

> The moving plot was designed to display and test moral character, to give room for moral choice and for its results. 14

Aeschylus made visible changes to the drama, altering such elements as the dress of the actors and the dance forms [15]. He seems to have been fond of grand visual effects. Consider the entrance of Agamemnon with Cassandra in his chariot, probably accompanied by retainers and captives, or the resurrection of Darius from his tomb. Aeschylus' attention to costuming and effect must have been detailed for the "Bios" says that on the appearance of the Furies in Eumenides such great terror was caused among the audience that the children died and women miscarried [16].

Aeschylus lived in a time of innovation and he was not above attempting his own experiments. He helped give drama its shape and so altered the course of drama to the present day. It is right to look at his work with an eye to the original, the innovative and even the daring, for, as Kitto observes, "Aeschylus was never a conventional or a cautious dramatist" [17].

That Aeschylus was a great thinker has been one of the commonplaces of criticism since at least the time of Frogs where Aeschylus meets Euripides' objection to his diction with the reply that

ἀνάγκη
μεγάλων γνωμῶν καὶ διανοιῶν ἴσα καὶ τὰ ῥήματα τίκτειν

it follows
that words are born to equal great thoughts and ideas.
(1059)

One need only look at the subjects and themes of the plays which survive to see that their author was a man almost obsessed with the relation of man to the gods and the universe [17]. Aeschylus was concerned with the nature of the gods, as can be seen in almost every play, but most particularly in Prometheus and Eumenides. He dealt with the concept of Justice in Oresteia and that of the inherited curse in both Oresteia and Septem. If Aeschylus does not always resolve the questions he raises, it is perhaps because the questions themselves do not admit of resolution. At any rate, Aeschylus was stirred by these thoughts and attempted to articulate his vision of them, his concept of order and his view of human and divine morality. Aeschylus is the first European whose opinion on these matters were given literary form and so survived the passage of time in the form in which they were created.

Aeschylus forever altered the face of tragedy. He gave it a dignity and majesty in its outward appearance, in its language and in its subject. He "took subject after subject from the epic tradition" [18] and gave tragedy a status which had previously been enjoyed only by the epic. Yet he took tragedy a step farther by concerning it with ideas and philosophy that had never concerned the epic poets. By the innovation of adding an actor he gave tragedy a scope and potential it had not previously possessed.

It is perhaps a comment on his times that despite, or possibly even because of, his innovations, Aeschylus was held in high regard

by his own contemporaries. He made at least one trip to Sicily as the guest or even at t' command of the tryant Hiero [19]. The "Bios" tells us that Aeschylus was commanded to present a performance of Persians and that that play was "esteemed very highly" by Hiero. No less than the literate court in Sicily did his own countrymen hold Aeschylus in honour. The "Bios" says that "the Athenians treated Aeschylus with so much affection" that after his death they voted that anyone who wished to produce an Aeschylean drama would automatically be granted a chorus. To a man who had fought for the freedom of his country at Marathon and probably also at Salamis, Plataea and Artemisium [20], t... free vote of his fellow-citizens would surely have been the greatest of honours.

There is no agreement about the number of plays which Aeschylus wrote. The Suidas says ninety dramas with twenty-eight victories, possibly including posthumous triumphs. The "Bios" indicates seventy dramas and five satyr plays with thirteen victories. The Medicean manuscript lists seventy-two plays although ten more can be identified from other sources. Of this prolific output only seven dramas and some fragments have survived.

In general the dating of the surviving plays is a matter of scholarly agreement. Persians was produced in 472 B.C., Seven Against Thebes in 467 and Suppliants in about 464. Oresteia, which is the only complete trilogy we possess, was performed in 458 B.C. The only play that cannot be set into the chronology with any agreement or certainty is Prometheus Bound, although it is often thought to be one of Aeschylus' latest plays [21].

Footnotes

1. R.H. Beck, Aeschylus: Playwright Educator, The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff, 1975, p. 7.

2. Herodotus VI 114. Quoted by U. von Wiliamowitz-Moellendorff; Aeschyli Tragoediae; Berlin, 1958, p. 10. Further citations from this work will be indicated by the siglum W-M. plus the appropriate page number.

3. Aeschylus I, Oresteia; Chicago, University Press, 1953, p. 2.

4. Marmor Parium, ep. 50, (W-M, p. 17).

5. Lattimore, Idem. Marmor Pariu, ep. 48, ibid., gives his age at Marathon as thirty-five.

6. Ep. 59, ibid.

7. W-M, p. 14.

8. Suidas, W-M, p. 17.

9. Gilbert Murray, Aeschylus, The Creator of Tragedy, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1940, p. 19.

10. Aristotle, Poetics 1449a 20:
(ἡ τραγῳδία) ἐκ μικρῶν μύθων καὶ λέξεως γελοίας διὰ τὸ ἐκ σατυρικοῦ μεταβαλεῖν ὀψὲ ἀπεσεμνύνθη.
Quoted by Murray, idem p. 19.

11. Quintilian X I 66, W-M, p. 12.

12. "Bios", W-M, p. 3.

13. Aristotle, Poetics 4, W-M, p. 12.

14. See H.D.F. Kitto, Greek Tragedy, A Literary Study, London Methuen, 1966, p. 33.

15. Dress: "Bios", W-M, p. 5; Atheneus, I 21^{d}, W-M, p. 12.
Dance: Murray, p. 44; "Bios", W-M, p. 3; Atheneus, W-M, p. 12. We are also told by Murray, p. 131, that when Telestes danced in Septem he made the audience "see the things that were being done".

16. P. 15.

17. See Peter D. Arnott, An Introduction to the Greek Theatre, London, Macmillan, 1959:
Aeschylus dealt with mighty themes, the relation of man to his gods. How far was man responsible for his own actions, how far compelled by the will of heaven? What happens when sacred commands and human compassion

conflict? (p. 64)
The grandeur of Aeschylus' language suits the grandeur of his themes. (p. 66)

18. Murray, p. 163.

19. The story that Aeschylus left Athens in anger, whether at the Athenians themselves (Frogs 807), or chafing at a defeat by Simonides ("Bios", W-M. 4; Pausanias, I 2,3, W-M. 11) or Sophocles ("Bios" ibid., Plutarch, Cim. 8, W-M. 10) is probably apocryphal. For an explanation of his visits, one need look no further than the desire for patronage at a court that had become a centre of artistic endeavour.

20. Marathon: "Bios", W-M. 3; Suidas, W-M. 14. Salamis: Schol. Pers. 428, W-M. 10. Plataea: "Bios", ibid. Artemisium: Pausanias I 14.5, W-M. 10.

21. C.J. Herrington, "Some Evidence for a Late Dating of the Prometheus Vinctus" CR 14 (1964). See also, J.P. Canavan, Studies in the Staging of Aeschylean Tragedy, (Diss.) Columbia University, 1972, pp. 17ff and OCD. "Aeschylus" 2.

CHAPTER II

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE KOMMOS

Although there has been a considerable amount of study devoted to the various poetic forms employed in the Greek dramas, one of the most interesting, the kommos, has been largely ignored, and no thorough review of it has been undertaken during this century. It is one of the aims of this study to provide a comprehensive examination of the kommos as it is employed in the works of Aeschylus.

One of the major reasons for this neglect of the kommos is the fact that there is a degree of hesitation in approaching a subject whose very definition is a matter of great controversy. There have been very few commentators in this century who have ventured to call a passage a "kommos" or "kommatic".

The word κομμός (kommos) derives from the verb κόπτω (I strike) and occurs only once in Aeschylus:

> ἔκοψα κομμὸν Ἄριον
> I struck myself in Arian lamentation. (Choe. 423)

The phrase occurs in a passage whose kommatic nature has never seriously been disputed. Some information may be derived from its occurrence. First, "kommos" refers to an act of lamentation, in this case, in grief at a death. Second, Aeschylus holds that act to be of Eastern, specifically Median, origin. Third, although it refers to a ritual, there is no evidence that that act involves anything more than a physical action. Certainly we cannot relate the word "kommos" to a bipartite lyrical form.

The use of "kommos" to describe a lyric scene involving an actor and the Chorus (that is, bipartite), originates with the twelfth chapter of Aristotle's Poetics.

> ἴδια δὲ τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς σκηνῆς καὶ κομμοί. . . . κομμὸς δὲ θρῆνος κοινὸς χοροῦ καὶ ἀπὸ σκηνῆς. [1]
>
> And peculiar to some plays are those i.e. songs from the stage and kommoi. . . . and a kommos is a threnody common to the chorus and the actor.

This is the first application of "kommos" as a technical term to describe a specific type of dramatic poetry. [2] Indeed, the definition seems simple and clear enough that there should be no difficulties.

If Aristotle's definition is followed the most readily discernable feature of the kommos is that it is κοινός (common) to the actor(s) and the chorus. Thus the form can be distinguished from the other lyrics named in this chapter of the Poetics by the simple expedient of seeking those which involve both parties. The definition of kommos seems to fit the structure of the Poetics. Taplin [3] believes that there is a balance of three actor's songs (prologue, episode and exode) and three choral songs (parode, stasimon, and kommos). We are inclined to follow the opinion of Leon Golden and O.B. Harrison Jr. [4] that "kommos" is added almost as an afterthought to fit the case of those lyrics which are nei- er wholly by the actors nor the chorus. This seems a more logical approach because it establishes a distribution of three actors' songs, two choral songs and one which is properly termed κοινός. The only difficulty which is likely to arise from this is a consideration of the quantitative amount of interchange necessary to establish a lyric as "common". We believe that there must be a relatively even distribution of lines between the chorus and the actor to fulfill this condition [5].

The difficulties in the Aristotelean definition are presented by the word "threnody".

First, the interpretation of θρῆνος itself is a matter of disagreement. It would seem from its root meaning to be almost synonymous with "kommos", since it stems from a verb (θρέομαι) which means "to cry aloud" or "to shriek forth". In this sense it need mean no more than "to lament". It acquired a meaning of "funeral song" or "dirge" in the work of Herodotus [6], and it is in this latter sense that Aristotle's definition is generally interpreted. Diehl identifies threnody with "Totenklage" or "death lament", although he permits a degree of latitude in his interpretation since he accepts both Aga. 1072 - 1177 and Eum. 777 - 891 as kommoi. He also points out that these same bipartite lyrics are referred to "here and there in the scholia" as θρῆνος [8]. Cornford, however, is somewhat more restrictive and uses "Threnos to denote a regular lamentation over the actual death of some person in the play [9]". Thus he excludes from consideration any more general type of lamentation.

The present study suggests that this limitation of threnos may be unwarranted. If the threnodic aspect of Aristotle's definition is to be accepted surely an attempt must be made to discover what meaning he himself attached to the word. Aristotle did not expand on the term except to suggest that it is almost interchangeable with kommos. We have already noted that the derivation of these two words need not indicate more than lamentation. Certainly the occurrence of θρῆνος and its cognates in Aeschylus does not support the equation of threnos with dirge.

Of the seven occurrences of threnos in Aeschylus [10] four

(Choe. 335, 342; Sept. 863, 1064) clearly fulfill the condition of being a lament over the dead. In Aga. 991 the Chorus refers to the "threnody of the Fury" which, although it might be a dirge for those killed in the past, is more likely a lament for the deaths which are about to occur. Cornford and Diehl [11] disagree about the threnodic nature of the exchange between Cassandra and the Chorus in Aga. 1072 - 1177. Aeschylus, however, has Cassandra refer to the passage in question as

θρῆνον . . . ἐμὸν τὸν αὑτῆς

my very own . . . threnody. (1322)

Here the word cannot be understood as a dirge for one who has died but most probably means merely "lament". It is, however, only proper to note that, given the immediate dramatic circumstances, Cassandra's choice of "threnos" may equally suggest a dirge for one who is about to die [12]. This type of dramatic justification, however, cannot be extended to Pro. 388:

μὴ γάρ σε θρῆνος οὑμὸς εἰς ἔχθραν βάλῃ.

Let not this threnos for me cast you into enmity.

This can only be a lament for a person who is in no danger of death, as Prometheus himself states:

ὅτῳ θανεῖν μέν ἐστιν οὐ πεπρωμένον.

To whom [myself] it is not appointed to die. (753)

In the use of the cognates of θρῆνος the implication of "dirge" is even less predominant. There are three instances in which a dirge is referred to (Per. 686, 937; Aga. 1541), three referring to impending death (Aga. 1075, 1165; Choe. 926) and four which are

lamentations (Sept. 78; Sup. 112; Pro. 43, 615) [13].

The question of the interpretation of the word θρῆνος has anticipated the second difficulty which the word presents: the limitation of the application of Aristotle's definition. If θρῆνος means only "dirge" then no more than four or five [14] of Aeschylus' bipartite lyrics will meet the criteria of the definition. We suggest, however, that since the interpretation of θρῆνος as "lament" was current some one hundred years before Aristotle, and since Aristotle himself provided no indication that such a restricted interpretation was intended, that it is reasonable to accept laments as fulfilling the threnodic aspect of the definition. Even if threnody is understood to include laments, there will still remain some bipartite compositions which cannot be reconciled with Aristotle's definition.

There remain two possibilities:

> 1. "Kommos" is not intended as a technical term to include all bipartite lyrics, or
>
> 2. The definition of the term, for some reason, has neglected to take into consideration a group of lyrics which are not threnodic in nature.

The second possibility seems the most probable and reflects some difficulties of a more general nature which are related to Chapter 12 of the Poetics [15].

According to Cornford [16], Eukleides substituted the term τὸ ἀμοῖβαιον (amoebaean) for "kommos". Since this word means "responses" its use probably implies a recognition of the difficulty presented by Aristotle's attempt to define the form in terms of content. "Amoebaean" is used by Cornford and Diehl to describe those bipartite lyrics which are not threnodic and is not considered by them to be interchangeable

with kommos.

In the late nineteenth century, however, there was a tendency to regard all amoebaean lyrics as kommoi [17]. Westphal [18] insisted that the threnodic must be weighted equally to the amoebaean in the definition of kommos and in this seems to have been followed by Diehl. Cornford first promulgated this view in English and since then the term kommos has almost disappeared from usage. With the recent work of Zenya Nakamura [19], interest in the kommos has been renewed and the trend seems to have come full circle, since she uses "kommos" interchangeably with "amoebaean".

It must be admitted from the beginning that it is impossible to reconcile all the bipartite lyrics of Aeschylus with the definition given in the Poetics. That "kommos" is intended as a technical term in that definition seems certain from the very similarity between the words "kommos" and "threnos". Any attempt to restrict the use of "threnos" to a certain type of lament is subjective and not supported by lexicographical data. It may be assumed, for the present, that the definition of "kommos" by Aristotle was based on a sampling of dramas which would support his contention, but that he allowed a wider range of meaning to "threnos" than dirge. With this in mind this study will be scrupulous in its use of the word "kommos", intending only bipartite lyrics of lamentation. Otherwise a "kommatic form" or "structure" will be understood to be synonymous with "bipartite".

Bearing in mind that the kommos is a poetic form of lamentation involving actor and Chorus it can be seen that the kommos is an almost essential element in Greek Tragedy. Since the Chorus, whether its role be that of a commentator on the action or that created by the

dramatic illusion of representing a particular group of people, is a necessary convention of the Greek tragic stage, its interaction with the actor will be essential to the drama. Since the sufferings or death of man is the essence of tragedy it follows that a frequent theme of the interaction between the actor and the Chorus will be that of lamentation.

So natural is this identification of bipartite lamentation with tragedy that some scholars have seen the kommos as "the original kernel of Tragedy" [20]. This theory holds that the lament for the dead hero (according to Murray, for the dead god himself in the agricultural cults), which was a part of the festival of that hero and was bipartite in structure, having a chorus and its leader (ἐξάρχων) [21], developed in time into dramatic form. The kommatic form, which by virtue of its fulfillment of the conventions of Greek drama, had proven its usefulness, might be seen to have developed in its turn away from its own origins to express other ideas and to include other emotions. This supposition would seem to explain the derivation of "kommos" as a technical term and the presence of non-threnodic bipartite lyrics.

The purpose of this work is to consider the seventeen kommatic passages [22] in the surviving tragedies of Aeschylus. These are compositions of interchange between the Chorus and at least one actor in which at least one party utilizes a lyric metre [23]. (It should be pointed out that it is extremely rare that both parties use only lyric metres). Through an analysis of the structure, metre, and, in particular, the dramatic purpose of these sections certain similarities may become apparent which will help determine what reasons

would necessitate the employment of a lyric exchange at a particular point in a drama. From these similarities it should be possible to derive some information about the kommos as a distinct genre of poetry at the time of Aeschylus. In its turn this will provide some illumination about the history of the form and its relation to the hypothesis that the kommos is the "kernel of Tragedy".

The passages from the works of Aeschylus have been arranged according to basic similarities in sense. This has been done more with a view to obliging the Aristotlean definition of kommos than to tracing any possible development or evolution of the kommos throughout the career of Aeschylus. Thus Chapters III, IV and V are related (in order of increasing marginality) to an extended definition of "threnos". A sixth chapter is included in order to treat those cases which cannot justifiably be considered as approximating in any sense the word "threnos", but which, by virtue of their kommatic structure would seem to be a species of "kommos".

Footnotes

1. $1452^{b}.18$ and $1452^{b}.24$; Aristotle; Poetics; edited with an introduction, commentary and appendices by D.W. Lucas; Oxford; Clarendon Press, 1968. ἀπὸ τῆς σκηνῆς, literally, "from the stage" to indicate actors' songs as opposed to choral songs which were presumably delivered from the orchestra.

2. See F.M. Cornford; "The So-called Kommos in Greek Tragedy"; CR. March 1913, p. 42 and also Oliver Taplin; The Stagecraft of Aeschylus; Oxford; Clarendon Press, p. 471.

3. Ibid. p. 475.

4. Aristotle's Poetics, A Translation and Commentary for Students of Literature; Prentice-Hall; Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1968, p. 173.

5. See below, Chapter III, p. 42, VI, pp. 109 - 111.

6. Greek - English Lexicon; Liddell and Scott; Oxford; Clarendon Press, 1964 edition, "θρῆνος".

7. "Κομμοί"; RE. xi; 1195.

8. Ibid. See also Lucas, p. 138.

9. Op. Cit., p. 44.

10. Choe. 335, 342; Sept. 863, 1064; Aga. 991, 1322; Pro. 388. All quotations from Aeschylus from Aeschyli, Septem Quae Supersunt Tragoedias; edited by Denys Page; Oxford; Clarendon Press, 1972. (Abbreviated as OCT.). All translations are my own unless otherwise noted. In passages quoted line number indicates the last line in the series.

11. All future references to the assignment of passages of Aeschylus to a category are to be understood as referring to the lists of Cornford, p. 43. and Diehl, 1197 - 1200.

12. See below Chapter IV, p. 66.

13. Per. 686: ὑμεῖς δὲ θρηνεῖτε ἐγγὺς ἑστῶτες τάφου
And you lamented standing near the tomb....
937: Μαριανδυνοῦ θρηνητῆρος
Of Mariandian mourners....
Aga. 1541: τίς ὁ θρηνήσων;
Who shall mourn him?
1075: οὐ γὰρ τοιοῦτος ὥστε θρηνητοῦ τυχεῖν
For he is not such as to chance upon a mourner.
1165: δυσαλγεῖ τύχαι μινυρὰ θρεομένας
Your sad fate as you wail it piteously....

Sept. 78: θρεῦμαι φοβερὰ μεγάλ' ἄχη.
I cry aloud at my sorrow great and fearful.
Sup. 112: τοιαῦτα πάθεα μέλεα θρεομένα λέγω
I speak of such sufferings, unhappy lamentations....
Pro. 43: ἄκος γὰρ οὐδὲν τόνδε θρηνεῖσθαι·
It is no remedy to lament for this man;...
615: ἀρμοῖ πέπαυμαι τοὺς ἐμοὺς θρηνῶν πόνους.
I have just ceased my labour of lamentation.

14. Cornford, pp. 41, fn. 1 and 43, accepts only four.

15. Chapter 12 of the Poetics has long been observed not to fit the state of tragedy as we know it from the fifth century. Ingram Bywater (Aristotle on the Art of Poetry; Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1909) observes that the Poetics

> was written for the benefit of the men of his own day, and with reference to the theatrical conditions of the time . . . . The general assumption in the Poetics is the theatre as it was in the middle of the Fourth Century. (p. 206, see also Taplin, p. 475 and Cornford, p. 41)

Additionally the twelfth chapter presents certain difficulties which have made it suspect in regards to its authenticity as the work of Aristotle.

According to Bywater (p. 205 in the nineteenth century Bernays, Bernhardy and Ritter rejected the twelfth chapter as an interpolation on the grounds that:

1. it breaks the continuity of the Poetics (see also Lucas, p. 135 and Golden and Harrison, p. 173),
2. the string of names and definitions are not at all necessary to Aristotle's Purpose,
3. the conclusion, as a repetition of the opening, betrays the hand of an interpolator (see also Lucas, p. 138).

Recently G.F. Else (Aristotle, Poetics; Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 1967) and O. Taplin (pp. 470 - 479) have doubted its authenticity on the following grounds:

> All of chapter 12 (according to the conventional numbering) except this first clause is excluded from the translation as spurious. Its feeble and repetitive definitions reek of some late grammatikos. (Else, p. 94, n. 85)

Certainly the definition of "kommos" is particularly inane:
1. the similarity between the root meanings of κομμός and θρῆνος make the definition look childish if we understand it to mean " a lament is a crying-aloud" or clumsy if we take it as " a kommos, that is, a threnody...". (The only resolution for this is that we must understand that 'kommos' is intended as a technical term),
2. if so, this is the only case in which a definition is attempted in terms of content,
3. as a result, the definition omits a number of lyrical

exchanges, particularly in the works of Aeschylus, which are not of a threnodic nature and are thus left uncategorized.

Echoing the question of authenticity Golden and Harrison (p. 175) additionally remark:

> To this rather sterotyped treatment of the chorus can be contrasted the functional approach at the end of Chapter XVIII (11. 55-64), an additional indication, perhaps, that Chapter XII is a late interpolation.

But Bywater (p. 205) objects that:

> 1. the terminology and brevity of the definitions is Aristotelean, [except that "episode" is used differently elsewhere, see Golden and Harrison, p. 174].
> 2. Aristotle may have felt the parts too obvious and recognizable to be passed over, and
> 3. this section has been anticipated earlier.

There does remain the difficulty of reconciling the definitions in Chapter 12 with what we know of fifth century tragedy. (For a rather full discussion of this aspect see Taplin, pp. 470ff). This is, of course, not necessarily an objection to the authenticity of Chapter 12, but rather to its value in understanding the remains of Greek Tragedy.

All of this, that is the fact that the Poetics seems to relate to drama of the fourth century, and the problems with the definition of kommos, lead us to agree with Cornford (p. 44) that "Poetics 12 is defining in 'Kommos' a term which belongs to the theatre of the fourth century and to a date at which the tendency to limit amoebaean composition to Threnoi had gone so far that the two were practically coextensive".

This brief review of the impact of Aristotle's remarks about "kommos" is intended to show that there are reasonable grounds for treating the definition in question with some wariness. The limited translation of 'threnos' as 'dirge', moreover, is entirely too restrictive. By extending the translation of threnos to a more general type of lamentation we would be more fully able to consider the nature of the Aeschylean kommos without doing an injustice to the ancient definition.

16. Op. Cit., p. 44, fn. 3.

17. Wecklein, in his edition of Eumenides; Teubner, Leipzig, 1888 p. 314, refers to the passage 917 - 1021 as "Kommos". This passage is one of rejoicing with absolutely no threnodic character and has therefore been included under the heading of "Problem Kommoi" in the present work.

18. Cited by Cornford, p. 41, fn. 1.

19. "The Kommos in and before Euripides", Annuario istituto giapponese di cultura I; 1963 - 1964; pp. 11 - 25.

20. Cornford, p. 42. See especially F. Adrados, Festival, Comedy and Tragedy. The Greek Origins of Theatre; Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1975, p. 5 for identification of sources and G. Murray, Op. Cit., p. 5.

21. See Iliad XXIV 723ff.

22. Sup. 348 - 406, 734 - 763, and 843 - 910. Per. 256 - 289, 694 - 702, and 908 - 1077. Sept. 203 - 244, 686 - 711, and 874 - 1004. Pro. 128 - 192 and 1040 - 1093. Aga. 1072 - 1177 and 1407 - 1576. Choe. 306 - 478 and 869 - 874. Eum. 777 - 891 and 916 - 1020.

23. Those cases in which the lyrics of one party alternate with a dialogue metre (Aeschylus used the iambic trimeter and anapaestic tetrameter as dialogue metres) are called "epirrhematic". "Epirrhemata" generally refers to the type of dialogue metre employed.

CHAPTER III

DIRGES

It would be an interesting and valuable study to analyse the inter-relationships between the kommoi of the plays of Aeschylus and their importance to the development of theme within the individual dramas. Such a study, however, presupposes a knowledge of the kommos as a genre. It is the purpose of this work to provide such a basis.

For this reason the kommoi are grouped according to content and meaning rather than in adherence to a scenic analysis in which the chronology of the plays would be a contributing factor. The grouping and arrangement of the compositions under consideration has, necessarily, been arbitrary, but it is not random.

This chapter discusses five passages which are distinctly laments over the dead. Bipartite dirges unquestionably fulfill Aristotle's definition of kommos and seem to be the more ancient use of the bipartite form.

Choephoroi (Libation Bearers) 306 - 478

Of all the bipartite compositions of Aeschylus this long and complex passage alone has been the subject of much critical attention. It is generally considered to be the archetype of the kommatic form. Therefore it would seem to be a suitable point from which to begin this study since it may provide direction when considering those passages which have not been so thoroughly analyzed.

Dramatic Situation

Some years after the murder of Agamemnon Orestes returns to Argos, at the command of the Oracle of Pythian Apollo which has

promised to protect him in exacting revenge upon the murderers of his father and threatened a dire fate if vengeance is not obtained (269 - 305). At the same time, Clytemnestra, the wife and murderess of Agememnon, having dreamt she had borne a viper and nursed it at her breast, sends Electra and a Chorus of Trojan serving women from the palace to offer libation at the tomb of Agamemnon in expiation of her dream and the Furies of Agamemnon (526 - 34).

Chagrinned at the hypocrisy of her mother's sudden concern for the rites of her father, Electra is advised by the Chorus to pray for vengeance and the return of Orestes. This she does, and asks

> αὐτῇ τέ μοι δὸς σωφρονεστέραν πολὺ
> μητρὸς γενέσθαι χεῖρά τ' εὐσεβεστέραν.
>
> as for me myself, grant that I become much more
> moderate than my mother and my hand more reverent. 141

Orestes reveals himself to her and recounts Apollo's prophecy.

> τοιοῖσδε χρησμοῖς ἆρα χρὴ πεποιθέναι;
> κεἰ μὴ πέποιθα, τοὔργόν ἐστ' ἐργαστέον.
> πολλοὶ γὰρ εἰς ἓν συμπίτνουσιν ἵμεροι,
> θεοῦ τ' ἐφετμαὶ καὶ πατρὸς πένθος μέγα
> καὶ πρὸς πιέζει χρημάτων ἀχηνία,
> τὸ μὴ πολίτας εὐκλεεστάτους βροτῶν,
> Τροίας ἀναστατῆρας εὐδόξῳ φρενί,
> δυοῖν γυναικοῖν ὧδ' ὑπηκόους πέλειν.
> θήλεια γὰρ φρήν. εἰ δὲ μή, τάχ' εἴσεται.
>
> Is it not necessary to trust such oracles?
> Or if I do not trust them, the deed must still be done.
> For many desires coincide in one:
> the command of the god and my father's great suffering,
> and the want of property presses upon me,
> and that these citizens, the most famous of men,
> who laid waste Troy in glorious spirit,
> might not be subject to this pair of women:
> for his heart is feminine, but if it is not,
> he will soon know. (305)

The two children join with the Chorus in the kommos.

Metrics and Structure

One may conclude from the length of this passage alone that Aeschylus considered it worthy of the most exacting attentions. A further indication of this is the fact that the structure of this kommos is the most elaborate in Greek Tragedy. [1]

The composition consists of eleven strophes [2], introduced and concluded by choral anapaests. The complexity derives from the fact that the arrangement of the corresponding strophe and antistrophe is not that of choral odes in which antistrophe follows its strophe, nor that of the majority of kommoi in which the strophe and antistrophe are separated by a lyric or dialogue passage delivered by the other participant. A diagram will prove helpful.

Introductory Anapaests (Chorus 306 - 314)

Section I (epirrhematic): [3]

α	β	α'	μ1	γ	β'	γ'	μ2	δ	ε	δ'	μ1'	ζ	ε'	ζ'
O	C	E	C	O	C	E	C	O	C	E	C	O	C	E
322	331	339	344	353	362	371	379	385	393	399	404	409	417	422

Section II (lyric):

η	ϑ	ι	ι'	η'	ϑ'
C	E	O	C	E	C
428	433	438	443	450	455

Section III (lyric):

κ	κ'	λ	λ'
OEC	OEC	ALL	ALL
460	465	470	475

Concluding Anapaests (Chorus or unison 476 - 478) [4]

The exacting symmetry of the first section is totally cast aside in the second section until a virtual unity is obtained in the third. It will become clearer that Aeschylus has used the form of this kommos to reflect the thematic and mental changes which occur during the passage.

The introductory anapaests set the tone of the kommos, being a prayer to the Fates and an invocation of the spirits of vengeance.

τοὐφειλόμενον
πράσσουσα Δίκη μέγ' αὐτεῖ.
ἀντὶ δὲ πληγῆς φονίας φονίαν
πληγὴν τινέτω.

And Justice
cries aloud that the debt be dealt with:
and for blow of death let deathly
blow be paid. (313)

Orestes prays that Agamemnon will hear his dirge and the Chorus reiterates the belief that the dead demand revenge. Electra invokes her father, seeking escape from her present misfortunes. The Chorus says that god can make a paean from a dirge. It is a standard wish which Orestes expresses in bemoaning that Agamemnon did not die by the hand of "some Lycian" at Troy, to leave fame to his house and glory to his children. In this wish for an honourable death is seen how the "want of property" which motivates Orestes should be interpreted. It is the dishonour of being debarred from his rightful inheritance, rather than actual poverty, which weighs upon him. Similarily, the Chorus hates Clytemnestra and Aegisthus: it is less dishonourable to be slaves to a glorious king or his legitimate successor than to murderers and usurpers.

It is with this in mind that the Chorus reminds Orestes of the dishonour which Agamemnon must endure in Hades as long as his death is unavenged [5]. Electra echoes Orestes' prayer that her father had died at Troy, completing the first two triads. Thus this part is concerned with the invocation of the dead and a wish to alter the past [6].

In the central mesode, which derives and emphasizes its importance from its position, the Chorus informs Electra that there is no point in dreaming idle dreams.

> ἀλλὰ διπλῆς γὰρ τῆσδε μαράγνης
> δοῦπος ἵκνεῖται. τῶν μὲν ἀρωγοὶ
> κατὰ γῆς ἤδη, τῶν δὲ κρατούντων
> χέρες οὐχ ὅσιαι †στυγερῶν τούτων
> παισὶ δὲ μᾶλλον γεγένηται†.
>
> But the sound of this twofold
> lash approaches; the succour of those
> already under the ground, since the hands
> of these abominable rulers are unclean,
> increases for the children. (379)

Again the essential concept of the impurity of the murderers is mentioned, but now in connection with a belief in assistance from the dead. Agamemnon is seen as an ἀλάστωρ (avenging spirit) in the tomb and Orestes becomes his agent on earth, his Fury.

Orestes acknowledges that Agamemnon has heard the prayer and beseeches Zeus to force vengeance up from below the ground:

> ... τοκεῦσι δ' ὅμως τελεῖται.
>
> ... accomplish this for our parents. (385) [7]

The Chorus asks for the right to sing the song of triumph (ὀλολυγμόν) over the man and woman and Electra prays that Zeus destroy them. The Chorus reiterates the law of vengeance. Orestes invokes the direction of the "Tyrants of the Underworld" (405) and Zeus. Electra ends the first section with a telling simile:

> λύκος γὰρ ὥστ' ὠμόφρων ὅσαντος ἐκ
> ματρὸς ἔστι θυμός.
>
> for as a wolf, likeminded, savage is
> the heart from its mother. (422)

This marks a turning point in the thought of the kommos. Pre-

viously all attention had been focused on the murderers as a unit and stress given to the role of Aegisthus [8]. Now the murderers become separated and the focus of attention will be shifted to Clytemnestra. The triads have developed the theme that vengeance is just and that it is demanded by the slain.

The second section becomes totally lyric and the carefully arranged symmetry of the first section is discarded [9]. This seems to indicate that the rational argumentation of the Chorus' anapaests has given way to a more emotionally charged situation. The Chorus recounts its lament for Agamemnon, and Electra recalls his unattended, unlamented burial. Orestes now invokes vengeance in an apostrophe to his mother:

> πατρὸς δ' ἀτίμωσιν ἆρα τείσεις
> ἑκατὶ μὲν δαιμόνων,
> ἑκατὶ δ' ἁμᾶν χερῶν.
> ἔπειτ' ἐγὼ νοσφίσας <σ'>όλοίμαν.
>
> Shall you not pay for the dishonour to my father
> according to the daimons,
> and according to my hand?
> And when you are killed, may I be destroyed. (438)

Although Orestes cannot bring himself to name his mother [10], this is the first time that we see him conscious of the fact that "Vengeance is matricide". As far back as 298 we have known that Orestes will commit the act of revenge, now we are brought to the realization that the act is one of enormous pollution. In his wish to be destroyed Orestes expresses his understanding and acceptance of this fact. It is more than the commonplace of, "I would die fulfilled", it is the recognition of the fact that having committed such an act his pollution would be too great to continue living [11]. The Chorus quick-

ly dispells any sympathy Orestes might have with his mother's fate:

> ἐμασχαλίσθη δέ γ' , ὡς τόδ' εἰδῇς.
> ἔπραασσε δ' ἅπερ νιν ὧδε θάπτει
> μόρον κτίσαι μιαρὸν
> ἄφερτον αἰῶνι σῷ.
> κλύεις πατρῴους δύας ἀτίμους.
>
> And he was even emasculated, that you should know this:
> and so she wrought when she buried him,
> desiring to make his fate
> unbearable to your life:
> you hear the second dishonour to your father. (443)

Lesky observes that here Orestes is hearing something new [12], which is central and meant to motivate him. This, although true, ignores a crucial consideration: the difference in the motivations and actions of Clytemnestra and those of Orestes. Clytemnestra has exceeded the proper limits of vengeance for the sacrifice of Iphigenia in the murder of Cassandra. Her jealous motives are emphasized in her maltreatment of the corpse of Agamemnon. The emasculation of Agamemnon may well have originated with Aeschylus to provide this very important contrast between the actions of Clytemnestra and Orestes [13]. Electra then recalls the dishonour she has suffered. Thus Orestes' personal motives are reiterated with new force and urgency. The second section ends as the Chorus tells Orestes to bear these thoughts in mind and that

> πρέπει δ' ἀκάμπτῳ μένει καθήκειν.
>
> It is right by being inflexible to stand fast and join battle. (455)

By interrupting the pattern, symmetry and order of speakers which was established in the first section, Orestes has become almost an auditor rather than a participant. This is necessary to impress

upon him his motives and the necessity of his act of vengeance.

The third section, in which all participants unite, is a concluding invocation of Agamemnon and the chthonic deities which prays for the triumph of revenge.

> ἀλλὰ κλύοντες, μάκαρες χθόνιοι,
> τῆσδε κατευχῆς πέμπετ' ἀρωγὴν
> παισὶν προφρόνως ἐπὶ νίκῃ.
>
> But hearing this prayer,
> Blessed Gods under the earth, send strength
> willingly to the children for victory. (478)

The movement of the kommos can thus be seen as the Chorus attempting to motivate the children to vengeance in the first section, being joined with a convinced Electra in the second, and finally united with Orestes in the third.[14]

Superficially, this is how the kommos advances. Yet we have known from before the kommos even began that Orestes was committed to the act of revenge. Contrary to Lesky's belief that the kommos enables Orestes to come to desire the act and thus implicate himself in guilt, Orestes has used the word "desire" (ἵμεροι) in line 299. The kommos provides no new element of desire, rather it reinforces and articulates the desire which already existed. Schadewaldt's belief[15] that it shows Orestes steeling himself for the deed also contains some truth, yet at the moment of action Orestes will still hesitate. Although the kommos moves from a general consideration of revenge against nameless opponents to vengeance being specifically matricide, we have known this from the beginning of the drama without ever needing to be told. In short, nothing is said or developed in the kommos that we do not know or cannot intuit from other sources.

Since this is the case one must ask why there is a kommos and why Aeschylus should have expended such care and attention on so long a scene which stands completely outside the dramatic action of the play. This will be encountered frequently in our study of kommoi: the kommos is often a moment which has been isolated from the action of the play, and which does not develop any new thought, theme or idea which contributes to the action of the drama. This observation will only be of use if it is used to direct attention to those elements which are recapitulated and developed in the kommos rather than to seeking a new element which provides impetus to the rest of the drama.

The kommos of Choephoroi provides a lyrical restatement and thus emphasis of the themes and ideas which are formulated and acted on elsewhere. In the first section the concept of Δίκη is developed: Vengeance is Just. The second gives the minor premise: Vengeance is Matricide. The resulting syllogism is Orestes' tragedy: Matricide is Just. This is tragedy on a human level: it is no tragedy if a man is forced by god alone to commit an act. Therefore Orestes' personal motives are re-emphasized. It is for the same reason that no mention is made of the command of Apollo during the kommos. Orestes is about to commit the most heinous crime of Oresteia, and yet, unlike his grandfather, father, and mother he will escape retributive vengeance. For the moment we are led to forget or ignore Apollo's promise of protection: the act of matricide must be understood in human terms to have the force of tragedy. Orestes accepts the potentiality of having to pay for his act. He is no Clytemnestra vainly hoping that by his

revenge he will have driven off the spirits of vengeance and be able to escape his own retribution. This recapitulation is dramatically effective because it elaborates the crux of the tragedy. In this sense then, the kommos here acts as a "binding song" which unites Orestes to his fate.

There is a magical quality to the kommos. Not only does it bind Orestes but it serves to awaken Agamemnon's wrath and to transform Orestes into the Erinys of his father. Moreover the kommos provides the γόος ἔνδικος (just lamentation) for Agamemnon. The lament is just because Clytemnestra had denied him his threnody and because it is sung by those with the most right to mourn him [16].

Guastalla is very much to the point when he suggests that the repetition of themes and ideas in a bipartite lyric form would make a greater impression and assist the comprehension of the audience [17]. Nakamura has missed this because she believes that the "kommos seems to have associated itself with a ... grandiose... scene <u>for its own sake</u>" [18]. By not questioning why a scene should be grandiose she makes a mistake which is similar to those who would insist that some type of action must be achieved in the kommos. By his elevation of the scene and his attention to the details of that scene Aeschylus focuses the attention of the audience on the thematic considerations which he wishes to make clear. In <u>Choephoroi</u> he even provides a type of apologia for the kommos:

> καὶ μὴν ἀμειμφῆ τόνδ' ἐτείνατον λόγον,
> τίμημα τύμβου τῆς ἀνοιμώκτου τύχης.
> τὰ δ' ἄλλ', ἐπειδὴ δρᾶν κατώρθωσαι φρενί,
> ἕρδοις ἂν ἤδη δαίμονος πειρώμενος.

None can find fault with the length of this discourse
you drew
out, to show honor to a grave and fate unwept
before. The rest is action. Since your heart is set
that way, now you must strike and prove your destiny
(513) 19

That there should be no dramatic development within the kommos "is blameless". The rest of the play, as Murray says [20], is "action".

Persae 256 - 289

Since Persae is concerned with the destruction of the Persian army as seen, ostensibly, from the Persian point of view, it can be no surprise that there should be a comparatively great number of dirges contained in the play. We may even regard the drama, with Adrados, as a "series of threnoi" [21].

The passage with which we are presently concerned is classified by Diehl as a kommos and by Cornford as a Quasi-Threnos.

Dramatic Situation

A mood of foreboding has been created by the deliberations of the Persian Elders and their dialogue with the Queen following her recounting of the dream which tormented her sleep. A herald enters with the news:

Πέρσαι. στρατὸς γὰρ πᾶς ὄλωλε βαρβάρων.
Persians, the entire army of the barbarians [22] is
destroyed. (255)

Metrics and Structure

The compostition is of the basic epirrhematic structure: strophe - dialogue response - antistrophe - dialogue response and so forth. This structure will become more familiar in succeeding chapters, since it is the essence of amoebaeans. Thus when it is said that a passage is an epirrheamtic structure with three strophes (as in this case) it

will be understood that the above formula will be repeated twice, that there are three strophes and corresponding antistrophes. It will not always be the case that there will be a concluding dialogue response.

Here Aeschylus uses iambic trimeter (the common dialogue metre) for the responses of the herald and lyrical iambs for the choral section. Possibly the brevity of the scene restricts the variety of lyrics employed, however the use of the iambic is interesting. This is the only use of iambs in the lyrical section of an Aeschylean kommos and is probably meant to convey the foreign atmosphere since the iamb is regarded as an eastern metre. Also of interest are the great number of resolutions with which Aeschylus varies this simple metre. The first line consists of eleven breves before a longum is reached. It is almost as though silence is building to a great cry of pain in which the longa of the "ai" dipthong alliterates the word of lamentation "αἰαῖ".[23]

This is a straightforward lament for death which the Chorus takes up on hearing the herald's news. As such there is frequent employment of words of lamentation. Although the announcement has fulfilled the Chorus' premonitions and the Queen's dream, the Chorus is first surprised by the novelty (νεόκοτα, 256) and unlooked for nature (ἄελπτον, 265) of the defeat. This is what increases the tragic intensity of the situation: that the Persians, previously unaccustomed to defeat, should be so completely overcome. As a result, the Chorus hints that it has lived too long:

ἦ μακροβίοτος ὅδε γέ τις αἰ-
ὼν ἐφάνθη γεραιοῖς, ἀκού-
ειν τόδε πῆμ' ἄελπτον.

Long seems this long life
to us elders, to
hear of this woe unexpected. (265)

The periodic nature of this kommos is effective. It is only in the Herald's last response that we learn where the defeat has occurred:

ὦ πλεῖστον ἔχθος ὄνομα Σαλαμῖνος κλύειν.
φεῦ, τῶν Ἀθηνῶν ὡς στένω μεμνημένος.

Oh, most hateful name of Salamis to hear;
Woe, how I mourn remembering Athens. (285)

To the Athenian audience this is the most important piece of news which the herald imparts and so it is held back to the end. To the Persians, however, the most important would have been the extent of the destruction and this has already been conveyed. Thus Aeschylus combines the natural interest of his chorus while building the dramatic suspense of the audience. Here Aeschylus fulfills the foreshadowing which he created immediately before the entrance of the herald when the Queen questioned the Chorus about Athens (230 - 45).

The Chorus' natural reaction to the herald's statement that "the entire army ... is destroyed" has been to give way to lamentation. During the lament two additional pieces of information were garnered: that the destruction was the result of a naval engagement (272 - 3, 278 - 9), and that it happened at Salamis and had some connection with the Athenians. It should seem fitting to the Athenians, only too familiar with the destruction wrought on their city, that the herald should "mourn remembering Athens". The scene is, admittedly, theatrical but it is natural for the Chorus to be overcome by grief and to give vent to that emotion. Their last words effect an oblique transition to the next scene:

ὡς Περσίδων πολλὰς μάταν
εὔνιδας ἕκτισσαν ἡδ' ἀνάνδρους.

How many Per[illegible] wives
in vain are now left manless. (289)

There is one Persian woman standing silently by to whom it is of paramount importance whether she has been left manless: the Queen. Thus the Chorus, overcome by disaster and their lamentation, recede into the background of our thoughts during the long scene between the Queen and the messenger. It is in this latter scene where the bulk of the information can be imparted in a rational dialogue exchange rather than in the emotional environment of the kommos.

Persae 908 - 1077

The final scene of Persae returns to a more complex scheme which befits the exodus of this threnodic drama. It is a threnos of ancient type and, although highly structured, such as might have been sung over the dead.

Dramatic Situation

At the very end of the play, after the fears of the Chorus, the dream of the Queen, the news of the Herald and the raising and prophecy of Darius, Xerxes enters. He is presumably alone, wearied from travel and grief, his garments rent (835ff). His first words begin the threnos.

Metrics and Structure

The structure is more complex than the simple epirrhematic exchange of 256ff. The composition falls into four sections of characteristic form and thought. The first section (908 - 30) is the introductory anapaests in which Xerxes prays for death and the Chorus laments the fallen youth of Persia. The second (931 - 1001,

strophes α - γ) is a catalogue of the dead. With the third section (1002 - 53, strophes δ - ζ) the lament proper begins. This is almost of lyrical stichomythia containing a great many words of lamentation and frequent repetition of words. The final section (1054 - 77, strophe η and the closing epode) gives visual expression to the lamentation as the Chorus beat their breasts, tear their hair and rend their garments while leaving the orchestra. The effect of this destruction of their barbaric and rich robes must have been spectacular and would visually express the greatness of the calamity.

The anapaestic metre predominates throughout this scene although it it of a strictly lyrical nature [24] and subject to frequent resolution. There are occasional mutations from the anapaest into the dochmaic (930, 936, 945 and 976) and iambo-choriambic (1007 and 1031) metres.

Persae does not have a specific climax. Rather, there is a gradual increasing of tension from the first inchoate fears of the Chorus through the announcement of defeat to the prophecy of Darius. All of this takes place in the absence of Xerxes, the character who is central to the tragedy. Thus the arrival of Xerxes provides a type of climax but it is one which is inextricably bound to the denouement. Ireland sees the absence of Xerxes as a method of focusing attention on him:

> The playwright has reduced to a personal and thereby more understandable level a power which in the end overstretches itself. For this reason it is on Xerxes that responsibility and attention rests.... The appearance of Xerxes [is] the visible symbol of all that his folly has achieved. (25)

Aeschylus has kept Xerxes before our minds but out of our sight even down to the evasive way in which Atossa asks for news of him:

βα. ὅστ' ἐπὶ σκηπτουχίᾳ
ταχθεὶς ἀνανδρον τάξιν ἡρήμου θανών;
αγ. Ξέρξης μὲν αὐτὸς ζῇ τε καὶ φάος βλέπει.

Queen: ... whose sceptered death
drained the ranks manless? Be quick.
Herald: Xerxes himself lives and looks on light.
(299)

And so it is that the ultimate appearance of this central figure wearing the rags which were once the robes of the Great King, should symbolically show the depths of his, and his nation's defeat.

The appearance of the visible symbol of their country's calamity has a sobering effect on the Chorus. In the ode preceding his entrance the Chorus made invidious comparisons between the days of glory under Darius and their present misfortune. They have come close to criticism of the Great King in lyrics such as:

Ξέρξης μὲν ἄγαγεν, ποποῖ,
Ξέρξης δ' ἀπώλεσεν, τοτοῖ,
Ξέρξης δὲ πάντ' ἐπέσπε δυσαρόνως
βαρίδεσσι ποντίαις.

Xerxes led, alas,
Xerxes destroyed, o woe,
Xerxes rashly all discharged
with ocean argosies. (553)

Now they are united not merely in allegiance, although this must be admitted, but in misery which is an even stronger motive. Only twice in the course of the kommos does the Chorus venture any word approximating criticism. Once when they lament

ἥβαν Ξέρξᾳ κταμένναν, Ἄιδου
σάκτορι Περσᾶν.

youth killed by Xerxes, who crowds
Hades with Persians (924)

and again when they refer to Xerxes as μεγάλατε Περσᾶν, "most infatuate of the Persians" (1016). The first is simply the fact of their misery, the second the cause of their misfortune. It is the delusion and the

infatuate desire embodied in "Ate" to which Aeschylus ascribes the Persian defeat, the overweaning ambition or hybris exemplified by one man: Xerxes.

The comparisons between Darius and Xerxes which we have noted above are central to the theme of Persae. More will be said of these contrasts of good and evil, of age and youth later [26] but it is important here to consider how these elements are treated in this final scene. The Chorus dwells at length upon the evils which now afflict the Persian nation:

κακοφάτιδα βοάν, κακομέλετον ἰάν.
This evil-omened shout and this evil-sounding cry, (936)

κακὰ πρόκακα λέγεις
You speak evil upon evil. (986)

δόσιν κακὰν κακῶν κακοῖς.
Evils of evils given to evils. (1041) [27]

It is Xerxes himself who completes the contrast with his father Darius:

ὅδ ἐγὼν οἰοῖ αἰακτός,
μέλεος γένναι γαῖ τε πατρῴᾳ
κακὸν ὄρ' ἐγενόμαν.

Here I bewail, alas,
miserable have I become
to my family and fatherland. (934)

Thus in his defeat, Xerxes assumes the responsibility and pain for the death which has been attendant on his hybris:

ἰώ.
δύστηνος ἐγώ
... τί πάθω τλήμων;
εἴθ' ὄφελε, Ζεῦ, κἀμὲ μετ' ἀνδρῶν
τῶν οἰχομένων
θανάτου κατὰ μοῖρα καλύψαι.

Woe;
Wretched me... (909)
what sorrow do I suffer? (912)
Would, Zeus, that the
fate of death had covered me
along with those who are gone. (917)

Overcome by the tragedy which has befallen their nation and confronted by the visible symbol of their nation and its catastrophe, the Chorus can no longer revile Xerxes. They can only share in his defeat and repentance. With a visible display of sorrow for the dead, and for themselves that they have lived to see this, the Chorus exits, united in misery with their king.

Septem 874 - 1004

This passage presents some difficulties with regard to the attribution of parts. In fact the question takes on increased importance since there is an excellent possibility that the speakers are two hemi-choruses, rather than an actor and Chorus. It is for this reason that Diehl classifies it as an amoebaean while Cornford, despite his usual reticence in these matters, considers it to be a true threnos [28].

Admittedly this question is most relevant to our discussion, yet the fact that it is impossible at this stage to resolve the problem conclusively, necessitates inclusion of this passage in this work. Indeed, since the matter is one of "editorial judgement"[29] it is probably correct to follow the general trend of most recent editors and translators in regarding this as an alternation between at least one actor and the Chorus. It must be emphasized, however, that there exists a very real possibility that Aeschylus originally wrote this passage as an exchange between two sections of the Chorus.

Dramatic Situation

As the text stands, the Chorus sings an ode following the announcement by the Messenger that Eteocles and Polyneices have killed one another at the seventh gate. Antigone and Ismene enter

with their brothers' bodies to sing the dirge.

Metrics and Structure

Again there is a complex, non-epirrhematic structure which is reminiscent of the final scene of Persae. Moreover, except for the fact that the concluding anapaests are not part of the kommos, the two are closely parallel in both structure and content.

Throughout this scene the metre is mixed and there does not seem to be a dominant metre on which the kommos is based. As is also the case in the ending of Persae, there is a two-part structure, the first being a lyrical section and the second being lyric stichomythia. In both sections there are sufficient internal indications of frequent change of speaker that the application of the term amoebaean is clearly warranted.

Remembering that a kommos must involve an actor with the Chorus, it will not be sufficient that this composition be indisputably amoebaean, if that style can be fulfilled by the use of hemi-choruses. We must now examine whether an actor is involved in this scene. If Wilamowitz' theory is correct that the stichomyths are divided between two choreutai acting as exarchonates of the hemi-choruses the sense would be close to a kommos but not one that would fulfill the Aristotelian definition since ἀπὸ σκηνῆς clearly indicates an actor.[30] The section of the scene most pertinent to the present discussion is 994 - 7.

-ἰὼὼ πόνος -ἰὼὼ κακὰ
-δώμασιν -καὶ χθονὶ
-πρὸ πάντων δ' ἐμοί.
-καὶ τὸ πρόσω γ' ἐμοί.
-Oh, pain. -Oh, evil.
-To house. -And to land.
-And above all to me.
-And henceforth to me.

Although it can be argued that the use of the singular pronoun to refer to a plural subject (if the speaker is a segment of the chorus) is justifiable, the sense of the lines does not admit of this. Lloyd-Jones' objection seems unanswerable:

> It cannot seriously be argued that any member of the Chorus can have claimed that to her above all others the death of the royal brothers was a grief, nor that any other member can have capped this preposterous claim by one equally preposterous. (31)

This is particularly to the point since δάμασιν implies a personal and familial grief. If these lines are accepted, it is right to agree with Lloyd-Jones that "we must conclude that 960 - 1004 were written for the sisters" [32].

Since the participation of Antigone and Ismene in the kommos is thus established, and since it is known that they have been present since 861, the next question is: "What part, if any, do the sisters play in the lyrics preceding the stichs?"

There is no such personal statement as 996 - 7 in the earlier section which would clearly indicate the participation of the sisters at any point. The argument from silence must apply here. As Lloyd-Jones remarks:

> it is even possible that some part of the lyrics was sung by the sisters.

And again:

> We cannot quite rule out the possibility that the sisters took part. (33)

The question remains unanswerable. Yet the one fact which may be asserted with some assurance is that the sisters do not begin the kommos at line 874 [34].

ἡμᾶς δὲ δίκη πρότερον φάμης
τὸν δυσκέλαδόν θ' ὕμνον Ἐρινύος
ἄχεῖν Ἅιδα τ'
ἔχθρὸν παιᾶν' ἐπιμέλπειν.

It is right for us, before their speech,
to sing the ill-sounding
hymn of the Furies and
the hateful triumph-song of Hades. (870)

Not only does this agree with Iliad (XXIV, 719ff.) in which the professional mourners begin the lament over Hector, but it coincides with the regular form of the dirge in Aeschylus, that is, the Chorus begins and the actor, although he joins in, becomes their leader.

It is probable that "the ill-sounding hymn of the Furies and the hateful triumph-song of Hades" is an elaborate periphrasis for dirge. Thus if the Chorus begins at line 874 there is not the unfulfilled promise which there would be if the sisters immediately entered into the lament. Possibly, too, the convention of the Chorus beginning the threnody militates against the sisters being involved in the first strophic pair.

It is certain, therefore, that the sisters cannot be involved before line 887 and must be involved at line 961. Of the rest nothing can be stated with any certainty. It would, however, be reasonably effective if the sisters spoke during the fourth pair, if only because they are the last children of Oedipus and Iocasta, on which the ending of the third antistrophe focused.

δυσδαίμων αριν ἁ τεκοῦσα
πρὸ πασᾶν γυναικῶν
ὀπόσαι τεκνογόνοι κέκληνται.
παῖδα τὸν αὐτᾶς πόσιν αὐ-
τᾶι θεμένα τούσδ' ἔτεχ',οἱ δ'
ὧδ' ἐτελεύτασαν ὑπ' ἀλλαλοφόνοις
χερσὶν ὁμοσπόροισιν.

Ill-fated she who bore them
beyond all women
who are called child-bearing:
taking her own child as
husband, she bore these who have
met their end at their mutually-slaughtering
brotherly hands. (932)

This passage does have the effect of calling attention to the other children born from this marriage, and it may be in recognition of this fact that the Medicean manuscript first introduces the sisters at line 933 [35]. It can be argued that the continued silence of the sisters would be as dramatically effective as their speaking at this point. Certainly there is nothing in the fourth strophic pair which requires that it be said by Antigone or Ismene.

If, then, the two major sections of this composition are such that the first is totally choral and the second almost wholly devoted to the actors, can we say that this is κοινὸς χοροῦ καὶ ἀπὸ σκηνῆς (common to the chorus and the actor) and therefore a kommos? We believe that we can do so. This long passage without the intervention of an actor is singular in Aeschylus, but that no more precludes the entire composition from being "common" to the parties than it provides a further reason for believing that the passage is an interpolation. Moreover, the theme and mood of the passage are consistent between the parts and there is a balance between the sections. The language throughout is that of lamentation.

Although the form may be somewhat unusual, there is scarcely a more traditional use of the kommos in Aeschylus. This is an immediate lament over the deceased prior to burial. There are none of the unusual situations presented in other cases, such as a lament some time after the death and burial (Choe. 306ff.), or before the

death (Aga. 1072ff.) or even that instance in Agamemnon (1448ff.) in which the Chorus wishes to make the dirge but is forbidden by the actor. The choral opening, the non-epirrhematic structure and the mixture of metres all seem to be traditional elements of the dirge.

However traditional the theme, mood, structure and metre might be, there remains an element which is essentially dramatic. That element is the articulation of the relationship between the deaths of Eteocles and Polyneices and the curse on the race of Laius and Oedipus [36]. Parallel to this is the motive of brotherhood, particularly in its relationship to the parents and which is emphasized by the frequent use of duals [37]. All of this is certainly more the conception of a dramatist than an act of spontaneous threnody. That the brothers have killed one another is an abomin act, as the Chorus has observed:

> ἀνδροῖν δ' ὁμαίμοιν θάνατος ὧδ' αὐτοκτόνος,
> οὐκ ἔστι γῆρας τοῦδε τοῦ μιάσματος.
>
> But for the death of men related by blood, who slay one another,
> old age is not reached by that pollution. (682) [38]

This act is part of the fulfillment of the curse of Oedipus and a retribution brought on the house of Oedipus for the transgression he committed in marrying his own mother. This in itself was part of the fulfillment of the curse upon the house of Laius. Pollution has begotten retribution and the retribution itself has engendered further pollution. Thus these motives are interwoven at the end of the trilogy to reinforce the theme of pollution and its requital.

The curse of Laius is not yet complete and the abomination of Oedipus has not yet been extirpated. There remain two descendants of Oedipus upon whom vengeance has yet to be exacted. If Aeschylus did

bring Antigone and Ismene on stage this late, can he have expected his audience to have been blind to the necessity of their paying for the sins of their father and mother? Would he not have provided an indication that the fulfillment of the curse, which can only be effected by the extermination of the house, would come to pass? Whoever wrote the final scene of Septem was not ignorant of these considerations.

Referring to the brothers, the Chorus observes

μένει
κτέανα τοῖς ἐπιγόνοις, (39)
δι' ὧν αἰνομόροις,
δι' ὧν νεῖκος ἔβα θανάτου τέλος.

There remain
possessions for their descendants,
through which they were doomed to a sad end,
through which their strife, which ended in death,
arose. (905)

The two ironies inherent in this statement are that it applies just as easily to Oedipus (and therefore his descendants) and the nature of the possessions which are left:

ὑπὸ δὲ σώματι γᾶς
πλοῦτος ἄβυσσος ἔσται.

And under their bodies there is
a wealth, unfathomed, of earth. (950)

Enough ground in which to be buried is all that is left to the members of this house.

We believe, then, that there is an indication in the kommos that Antigone and Ismene are "doomed to a sad end" as the last representatives of their family. In Antigone's determined refusal to accede to the demands of the Herald, the beginning of that end is seen. Perhaps it is poor dramatic technique to introduce two characters at the end of the trilogy and a scene which seems anticlimactic. Yet

Aeschylus is concerned with a theme and its development and completion, and the scene is hardly inconclusive. Antigone does go off, in direct opposition to the Herald's commands, to bury Polyneices. One feels as certainly as if there were a fourth drama on the subject of her payment, that her violation of human law will have as certain a requital as her parents' and her brothers' violation of divine ordinance [40].

Agamemnon 1407 - 1576

The lineation of the kommos of Agamemnon is a matter of some dispute. Cornford refers to the section following 1448 as an "Imperfect Threnos", meaning that there are elements which are not consistant with a regular lament over the dead. Both Nakamura [41] and D.J. Conacher [42] refer to the kommos as beginning at line 1407. Diehl, however, classifies 1407 - 30 as an amoebaean and 1448 - 1576 as a kommos. It is wrong to omit the lines 1431 - 47 since these are necessary to complete the amoebaean structure.

For the purpose of this study the passage is regarded as being a two part composition, similar to the dirge in the Septem and the final scene of Persae. The first section, 1407 - 47, is an epirrhematic discussion, while the second is a more complex form which is similar to the majority of the dirges which have been reviewed.

Dramatic Situation

Having just murdered Agamemnon and Cassandra, Clytemnestra is revealed standing over the bodies of her victims. In an almost trance-like state she describes the murder and claims it as a victory[43]. She invites the Chorus to share her joy,

χαίροιτ' ἄν, εἰ χαίροιτ', ἐγὼ δ' ἐπεύχομαι.

Rejoice, then, if you would rejoice, but as for me,
I exult. (1394)

The Chorus, aghast with grief and disbelief, marvels at her insolence (θρασύστομος 1399), to which Clytemnestra expresses her complete contempt,

σὺ δ' αἰνεῖν εἴτε με ψέγειν θέλεις,
ὁμοῖον. ...
τάδ ὧδ' ἔχει.

But you may wish to praise or blame me,
it is all the same. ... (1404)
That is how it is. (1406)

The Chorus begins the lyrics which open the kommos.

Metrics and Structure

The first section (1407 - 47) consists of an epirrhematic exchange in which Clytemnestra has iambic trimeter epirrhemata and the Chorus sings lyrics composed of only dochmiacs [44]. As this metre will be encountered more frequently later, let it suffice for the present to remark that the metre is associated in tragedy with unhappy situations, usually of a threnodic or semi-threnodic nature. This section occupies the first strophic pair.

The second section (1448 - 1576), which includes the three remaining strophes, is more complex. The choral lyrics are of mixed metre while Clytemnestra's are primarily anapaestic. These are generally tetrameter but admit frequent resolutions and shortened lines.

The first section begins with the chorus castigating Clytemnestra for her deed.

ἀπέδικες ἀπέταμες ἀπόπολις δ' ἔσῃ,
μῖσος ὄβριμον ἀστοῖς.

You have cast away, you have cut away, and you will
be without a city,
a burden of hatred to your townsmen. (1411)

Clytemnestra's mood is calmer than it was when she entered fresh from the slaughter and exulting in the trance-like state in which she committed the murders. Her reply to the Chorus' provocation is a measured and rational argument based on the laws of vengeance:

οὐ τοῦτον ἐκ γῆς τῆσδε χρῆν δ' ἀνδρηλατεῖν
μιασμάτων ἄποιν';

Was it not necessary for you to banish this man from
this land
as the penalty for his pollution? (1420)

The Chorus is moved only enough to grant the premise of her revenge and the necessity it enjoins upon her:

ἄντιτον ἔτι δε χρὴ στερομέναν φίλων
τύμμα τύμματι τεῖσαι.

Still, in requital, it is necessary for you, lack-
ing friends,
to pay back blow for blow. (1430)

The theme of requital becomes one of the major threads of the kommos. It is picked up again in 1528 - 29:

ξιφοδηλήτῳ
θανάτῳ τείσας ἅπερ ἦρξεν.

In dying death,
sword-driven, he repaid what he began,

restated in 1560 and 1562:

ὄνειδος ἥκει τόδ' ἀντ' ὀνείδους,...
φέρει φέροντ', ἐκτίνει δ' ὁ καίνων.

This is reproach for reproach,...
she ravages the ravager, and the killer pays
full penalty,

until the theme is fully expounded at the end of the kommos:

μίμνει δὲ μίμνοντος ἐν θρόνῳ Διὸς
παθεῖν τὸν ἔρξαντα. θέσμιον γάρ.

And while Zeus remains on his throne this remains:
"The doer suffers"; for this is according to law.
(1564)

Because these statements are so closely related to the theme of vengeance which continues to be explored in the remainder of the trilogy, there is a prophetic aspect to them. By killing Agamemnon Clytemnestra has linked herself to the fatal chain of retribution. She does not recognize the irony when she says

πρὶν καταλῆξαι
τὸ παλαιὸν ἄχος, νέος ἰχώρ.

Before the old woe
subsides comes fresh suppuration. (1480)

The Chorus, however, perceives the relationship:

δέδοικα δ' ὄμβρου κτύπον δομοσφαλῆ
τὸν αἱματηρόν. ψακὰς δὲ λήγει.
Δίκα δ' ἐπ' ἄλλο πρᾶγμα θήγεται βλάβης
πρὸς ἄλλαις θηγάναισι Μοίρας.

And I am afraid of the bloody beat of the storm
shaking the house; and the drops are ceasing.
And Justice is being sharpened for another deed of bane
on other whetstones of Fate. (1536)

If Clytemnestra is blind to the prophetic quality of these utterances, it is perhaps because she is suffering from a profound change of mood during the progress of the kommos. She began in a state of ecstatic righteousness caused by the intense emotion and the almost demonic possession which enthused her during the act of murder. The rationality which marked her exchange with the Chorus in the first section modulates when the Chorus reminds her of the nature of the law of vengeance (1430), into a very emotional exposition of her personal reasons for revenge. Her reply, although still in the rational iambic trimeter, is probably one of the most coarse pieces of invective to be found in literature. The sorrow that she feels for Iphigenia is

remote from the hostility that she vents on Cassandra:

> ἥ τ' αἰχμάλωτος ἥδε καὶ τερασκόπος
> καὶ κοινόλεκτρος τοῦδε, θεσπρατηλόγος,
> πιστὴ ξύνευνος, ναυτίλων δὲ σελμάτων
> ἰστοτριβής.
>
> And she, the captive of his spear, both wonder-seer
> and bedmate of this man, teller of prophecies,
> trusted mistress and mast-rubber
> of the ship's benches.... (1443) [45]

The change in Clytemnestra has begun. To this point the epirrhematic structure has tended to indicate a restraint of emotion, which although it has been close to the surface has now come completely to the fore. Murray observes that at the beginning

> She is possessed by the Daemon of the House (1475ff.)
> and for the moment filled with superhuman strength
> and pride, which dies down later. [46]

Clytemnestra weakens as the demonic power leaves her and there is a parallel movement from assurance to resignation which borders on fear. A contrary movement is also employed by Aeschylus. At the height of her possession by the daemon Clytemnestra vaunts her own commission of the deed. Five times in her speech before the kommos she states that she herself kil' Agememnon as a sacrifice. No other person or force is mentioned. At the beginning of the kommos she says:

> οὗτός ἐστιν Ἀγαμέμνων, ἐμὸς
> πόσις, νεκρὸς δέ, τῇδε δεξιᾶς χερὸς
> ἔργον, δικαίας τέκτονος.
>
> This man is Agamemnon, my
> husband, but a corpse, the work of this right
> hand, a righteous contriver. (1406)

Yet as the power of the daimon leaves her, she increasingly identifies herself as an agent of the daimon and correspondingly less the wife of Agememnon:

> αὐχεῖς εἶναι τόδε τοὔργον ἐμόν,
> τῇδ' ἐπιλεχθείς,
> Ἀγαμεμνονίαν εἶναί μ' ὄλοχον.

φανταζόμενος δὲ γυναικὶ νεκροῦ
τοῦδ' ὁ παλαιὸς δριμὺς ἀλάστωρ ....

You assert that the deed is mine,
omit to say this:
that I am the wife of Agamemnon;
but rather the phantom of the wife of this corpse,
the old keen spirit of revenge .... (1500) 47

Concurrent to this is a growing importance in the role played by Aegisthus in the murder. He is first mentioned in line 1436, but there is no indication at that point that he has assisted in the killing, and Clytemnestra has continued to refer to herself in the singular. By the end of the kommos, however, Clytemnestra is so enervated that she lapses into the plural, thereby sharing the responsibility for the murder:

πρὸς ἡμῶν
κἀπέσε κἀτθανε, κἀ' καταθάψομεν.

at our hands
he fell and died, and we shall bury him. (1553) 48

It is a far different Clytemnestra who ends the kommos praying for peace:

ἐγὼ δ' οὖν
ἐθέλω δαίμονι τῷ Πλεισθενιδᾶν
ὅρκους θεμένη τάδε μὲν στέργειν
δύστλητά περ ὄνθ' , ὃ δὲ λοιπόν, ἰόντ'
ἐκ τῶνδε δόμων ἄλλην γενεὰν
τρίβειν θανάτοις αὐθένταισιν.
κτεάνων δὲ μέρος βαιὸν ἐχούσῃ
πᾶν ἀπόχρη μοι, μανίας μελάθρων
ἀλληλοφόνους ἀφελούσῃ.

Yet I myself
wish to swear an oath to the daimon
of the Pleisthenids to be content with these things
however hard they are to bear; and herafter, going
from this house, let him harass some other family
with kindred murders.
And having a small share of possessions
is all that is sufficient for me, if I have driven off
from these halls the insane slaughter of one another.
(1576)

Already indications have been given that her prayer will not be fulfilled. Clytemnestra has joined herself in the chain of retribution. She has committed hybris in killing Cassandra, overstepping the limits of divinely sanctioned vengeance for personal motives. Indeed, she has had too personal a motive for even the killing of Agamemnon. As such her prayer is corrupt. It is a continuation of the ongoing perversions of the feasts of Tantalus and Atreus, the perverted marriage of Paris and Helen (1156ff. and 1455ff.), the corrupt sacrifice of Iphigenia and the truly perverted "sacrifice" of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra's consequent wish to pour libations over his corpse (1395 - 98). Clytemnestra has added new outrage to old; she has not succeeded in driving "off ... the insane slaughter of one another".

> The power of the scene comes partly from this, that the superb and triumphant Queen, by her own act, has placed herself in the same position as the King over whose body she is exulting. [49]

One may even see a reflection of the motive of corrupted rights in the form that this kommos takes. This is not a lament led by the family of the deceased, as would be proper. On the contrary, the family, represented by Clytemnestra, specifically forbids the dirge (1551ff.) which the chorus wishes to sing. It is necessary, therefore, for the Chorus to insert their dirge into the structure of the kommos in asides [50]. The corruption of ritual is complete and this serves as a further indication that Clytemnestra's prayer is incapable of fulfillment.

In Clytemnestra's prayer, then, the three motives we have been considering ultimately converge: the motive of corrupted ritual, the motive of Clytemnestra's demonic possession and the motive of retribution.

The theme which concerns the law of retribution is the overriding consideration of the trilogy. In spite of the devout wish expressed in her prayer Clytemnestra has not ended the operation of this law.

In the antistrophe immediately preceeding the prayer the Chorus has not only fully expounded this theme, but has asked a question most pertinent to the rest of the trilogy:

> μίμνει δὲ μίμνοντος ἐν θρόνῳ Διὸς
> παθεῖν τὸν ἔρξαντα. θέσμιον γάρ.
> τίς ἂν γονὰν ἀραῖον ἐκβάλοι δόμων;
> κεκόλληται γένος πρὸς ἄταν.
>
> And while Zeus remains on his throne this remains:
> "The doer suffers"; for this is according to law.
> Who could cast out the cursed seed of the house?
> The race is bound fast to destruction. (1566)

Ironically the Chorus has answered its own question as it had answered it in a previous question:

> ὦ ἰή, διαὶ Διὸς
> παναιτίου πανεργέτα.
> τί γὰρ βροτοῖς ἄνευ Διὸς τελεῖται;
> τί τῶνδ' οὐ θεόκραντόν ἐστιν;
>
> Woe, on account of Zeus
> the all-causing, the all-doing.
> For what among mortals is brought to consummation
> except through Zeus?
> What is there of these things which is not god-ordained?
> (1488)

It is of interest that these are the only two references to Zeus in the kommos. The rhetorical questions of the second passage answer the question posed in the first: Zeus could cast out the cursed seed of the house. Only Zeus, "the all-causing, the all-doing", Zeus Teleios, "the Fulfiller, the Accomplisher" has the power to bring these things to consummation. This is what will be seen at the end of the trilogy, in the great "Kommos of Reconciliation" which ends Eumenides.

The bipartite lyrics just reviewed fulfill the Aristotelian definition of kommos in its most limited sense. These are truly threnodies over the dead which are shared by the actor(s) and Chorus. They reflect the dirge over Hector at the end of the Iliad in their choral opening and in the participation of the family of the deceased. Possibly even the metric complexity is intended to reflect the spontaneous nature of the threnodic lament for the dead. The invocation of the dead and recounting of the manner of death would also seem to be elements which were common to dirges sung at the death or burial of a man.

There are, however, elements which are entirely dramatic in nature, the creation of a dramatist for his own purposes. The first of these is the structural complexity which is best exemplified by the kommos of Choephoroi 306ff. The imposition of such an elaborate structure, the confinement of grief to such a formalized system is clearly the work of a poet. The employment of that structure to emphasize the dramatic and poetic conception indicates an artistic form in which the imitation of life is but to serve an ulterior motive. This leads to the second dramatic element of the kommos: the use to which the form is put. Aeschylus uses the kommos at climactic points, to effect transition to a subsequent scene and as foreshadowing. Most importantly he has used the kommos as an emphatic focus for his ideas and themes. Aeschylus has elevated the dirge to a highly important dramatic event. He focuses his thematic concepts into a form which at once arrests the attention of his audience and so focuses the viewers' attention on that theme.

These dramatic elements recur in further study of the kommos. This should not be considered surprising. Rather, it would be surprising if a form as effective as the bipartite lyric were to have been limited to use only in laments over the dead.

Footnotes

1. Part of the reason for this is the involvement of two actors with the Chorus. The only other instance in Aeschylus is Septem 874ff., in which the division of the systems seems to be handled in a much different and simpler manner.

2. This is following the OCT of Page and Anne Lebeck, The Oresteia: A Study in Language and Structure, Washington, Center for Hellenic Studies, 1971, p. 114f. Nakamura, Op. Cit. p. 13, F. Blass, "On the ΚΟΜΜΟΣ in the Choephoroe", Ha. XIII, 1905, p. 287, and R. Guastalla, "Le Kommos des Choephoroe", Melanges Desrousseaux, Paris, 1937, p. 191, view it as ten systems, taking η & ϑ as one system. A.S. Sidgwick, Choephoroi, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1900, p. 27, sees it as twelve systems, taking the two corresponding mesodes (340 - 44 and 400 - 04) as a strophe.

3. This section is called triadic from the grouping of systems in units of three separated by mesodes (μ). The Choral sections here use anapaests as epirrhemata while the lyrics are an assortment of simple metres (see Guastalla, p. 194). In this diagram the strophes are numbered in Greek characters with the corresponding antistrophes marked '. Similarly the first and third mesodes (see note 2, above) are marked μ1 and μ1'. Line numbers indicate the termination of the system. Speakers are indicated as Orestes, Electra and Chorus.

4. T.G. Tucker, The Choephoroi, Cambridge, University Press, 1901 observes in his note to lines 314 - 421 (p. 77):

> Inasmuch as the MS does not specify the speakers and mostly omits even the paragraphus which marks a change, the whole structure of the kommos was long unintelligible and much of its meaning misconceived. The discovery of the antistrophic correspondences and a proper assignment of parts to the personae began with Hermann, and have since made gradual progress, until Wecklein has been enabled to formulate a perfectly symetrical arrangement.

5. This reiterates the concept expressed 291 - 92:

> καὶ τοῖς τοιούτοις οὔτε κρατῆρος μέρος
> εἶναι μετασχεῖν, οὐ φιλοσπόνδου λιβός
> And for such there is neither portion to share
> in the cup, nor draught of drink for friends.

It is unnecessary to speculate on whether Agamemnon is a king in Hades (Lesky, Der Kommos der Choephoroe, Vienna, Pichler Tempsky, 1943, p. 49f.). The essential issue is not the possible loss of status but the proper honour due the dead, honour that has been denied not only by the continued existance of the murderers but by the lack of a proper dirge (511).

6. Lebeck, p. 115

7. Lesky's discussion of this word (p. 66f.) seems to miss the impact of the double entendre. The dative can mean either "for" (on behalf of) or "to" (upon). Lebeck (p. 118 and note 20 p. 202) comes closer to the double intent Aeschylus meant to convey. "Accomplish this for our parent (father), accomplish this upon our parent (mother)". Indeed if we alter ὅμως to ὁμῶς of MΣ the double intent becomes quite evident.

8. On the importance of Aegisthus see 111 and 305. The union of the murderers is indicated by plurals and duals: 41, 82, 121, 132 - 34, 142 - 44, 234, 273, 367. See also Lesky, pp. 23, 69f.

9. But see Blass, pp. 269ff and 283 on Wilamovitz' transposition of 434 - 38 to follow 455; Brooks Otis, Cosmos and Tragedy, University of North Carolina Press, 1981, p. 71f.

10. Indeed, he will not use the word μήτηρ until 899, when, confronted with the actual commission of the act he will turn to Pylades:

    Πυλάδη, τί δράσω; μητέρ' αἰδεσθῶ κτανεῖν;

    Pylades, what shall I do? Do I dare kill my mother?

    Electra, however, has used the word "mother" from 90. She may do so since she will be blameless of the actual commission of the act and by her use of the word emphasis is given to Orestes' omission.

11. See Lesky, p. 95f.

12. Idem, p. 85. This passage does not confirm his contention that the earlier part of the kommos is concerned with the act of murder and the later with the maltreatment of Orestes and Electra, but rather the reverse.

13. Lesky, in developing his theory of the importance of personal guilt and divine responsibility, passes over the matters of motivation and excess. This is not to say that the union of free will and necessity does not play an important part in the philosophy of Aeschylus. Rather, the resolution of the problem posed by Oresteia hinges not on personal guilt joined to the necessity of Δίκη, for all the crimes of the house have been so committed, nor on the specious arguments of Apollo in Eumenides, but on the fact that Orestes alone does not exceed the just proportion of revenge nor commit hybris.

14. Such a view is held by Lebeck, p. 113, Lesky, p. 116 and M. Untersteiner, "Le Coefore di Eschilo, Il Commos", Dioniso, 1949, p. 173.

15. Wolfgang Schadewaldt, "Der Kommos in Aischylos' Choephoren", Hermes, 1932.

16. Lesky, p. 39.

17. Op. Cit., p. 196.

18. Op. Cit., p. 13, emphasis ours.

19. Translation from Lattimore, p. 111.

20. Op. Cit., p. 180f.

21. Op. Cit., p. 82.

22. "Barbarians" must not be taken in any perjorative sense. The simple meaning of "non-Greek", or any English term such as foreigner, seems stranger in translation than it apparently did to the Greek audience.

23. All of this supposes ἄνι' ἄνια κακά to be the correct reading although Pauw's emendation of αἰν' αἰνα κακά is certainly attractive on the basis of alliteration.

24. That is, not the anapaestic tetrameter of dialogue.

25. S. Ireland, "Dramatic Structure in the Persae and Prometheus of Aeschylus", G&R. 20 (1973), p. 168.

26. p. 101f.

27. The language in which Xerxes acknowledges their charges reinforces the connection between the present miseries, youth and dangerous novelty....
Helen E. Moritz, "Refrain in Aeschylus", CPh. 74, (1979), p. 194.

28. The problem revolves around several considerations. The first of these is the general lack of indication of parts in the ancient manuscripts. As Taplin observes in "Aeschylean Silences and Silences in Aeschylus" (HSCPh. 76, 1972, p. 85), "It seems possible ... that there was a stage when the attribution of parts was not marked in the text". He also notes that M attributes nothing to the sisters before 933 (Idem). All this is complicated by the fact that the general verdict of editors is that the final scene between Antigone and the Herald is a later interpolation (Kitto, p. 52; and by implication Murray, p. 141; see also Page, OCT., note on 1005 - 78).

Thus the central problem is where the interpolation begins, since any attribution of parts would probably be subsequent to the interpolation. If we accept that the passage under discussion was originally intended for two sections of the Chorus, it would have been a simple matter for the interpolator to assign one of the choral parts to either or both of the daughters of Oedipus in order to provide continuity to the final scene. This in turn would have necessitated the interpolation of 861 - 74. It is argued that there is no sound dramatic reason for Aeschylus to introduce the sisters at such a late point in the play and that the scene is too closely related to Sophocles' Antigone to be brought up and left unresolved at the end of a trilogy.

We must note, however, that from what we can see in Homer and in other cases in the dramas the general form of the kommos was for the family of the deceased to act as exarchontes of the chorus in the lament. Therefore it could be that the sisters were introduced merely to fulfill this traditional role.

H. Lloyd-Jones has dealt with the problems connected with this scene and the history of the scholarship pertaining to it in his article "The End of the Seven Against Thebes" (CQ N.S. 9, 1959, 80 - 115) and the reader is referred to it for a discussion of these matters.

The entire question of attribution of parts and possible interpolation is not one which admits of universal agreement. To those who believe that sections are interpolated, none of our analysis will have any validity. If 961 - 1004 is interpolated it is unnecessary to regard this passage as a kommos, since only 996 - 97 can unequivocably relate only to the sisters. Bearing in mind Aeschylus' sense of innovation, the possibility cannot be gainsayed that the section from 874 - 960 was intended for sections of the Chorus. If all of the section, or any major portion from 861 onwards was interpolated, we need not consider this in a study of Aeschylus. If that is the case, we may agree with Lloyd-Jones (p. 113) that it is strange that a play as well regarded in antiquity and as well known, would have suffered such wholesale revisions.

29. Taplin, p. 85.

30. An actor can serve as exarchon of the Chorus (Adrados p. 1), but although the function in a dirge hearkens back to this use, ἀπὸ σκηνῆς marks a distinct development away from the earlier choral roots of tragedy.

31. Op. Cit., p. 108, note 1.

32. Op. Cit., p. 108.

33. Both from p. 105.

34. So Lloyd-Jones, p. 101ff. in opposition to A. Sidgwick, Septem Contra Thebas, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1903, p. 59. Sidgwick's interpretation demands that we ignore the part played by the professional mourners in Iliad 24, 719ff. and does not account for the "hymn of the Erinyes" here.

35. Lloyd-Jones, p. 105, Taplin, p. 85 (see footnote 1 above).

36. Race (house): 877, 880, 881, 895 and 915.
Curse: 894, 898, 945 and 954.

37. Parents: 877, 885, 898, 914, 926ff. (927), 945 and 1004.
ὁμός compounds: 890, 931 and 932. The concept of 'brother' is expressed chiefly through the use of duals.

38. See below, p. 76f.

39. See Lloyd-Jones pp. 87 - 92 on the subject of ἐπιγόνοι. Certainly the word could here translate as "those who come after". The irony of the statement is, of course, increased if Eteocles and Polyneices left no descendants. With regard to Aeschylus' use of the word as a title we suggest that in the absence of any information on that play and any attempt to connect it in trilogy, it is impossible to state categorically that it is connected with the Theban cycle.

40. It is not impossible that Aeschylus, and not Sophocles, was the first to establish the form of the myth as we know it in respect of the sisters. The OCD. "Antigone" does not advance this theory, indeed it disparages the ending of the Septem, but its discussion of the myth and its probable development at the hands of Attic dramatists is of value.

41. p. 13.

42. "Interaction between Chorus and Characters in the Oresteia", AJPh. 95, (1974), p. 324. We take exception to his reference to the kommos as lines 1407 - 1577 since the termination is incorrect. Florence M.B. Anderson., "The Metrical Arrangement of the Kommos in the Agamemnon of Aeschylus", AJPh. 45, (1924), pp. 70 - 71, understands the kommos as lines 1448 - 1576.

43. In 1378 we should prefer νίκης to Heath's νείκης. Her cry of victory (ὀλολυγμός) is corrupt, see Moritz p. 211.

44. This is unusual in Aeschylus whose general tendency is to combine the dochmiac with other meters, especially the iambic. 1411 and 1430 present rare instances of a longum in the penultimate position.

45. (ἰστο- reading from codd. prefered.) The sexual nature of this vilification is heightened by the phallic symbolism of αἰχμάλωτος and ἱστοτριβής. Clytemnestra's jealousy is so intense that she ignores the fact that Cassandra's history does not indicate the type of wanton behaviour here portrayed.

It seems strange that the vile connotations of ἱστοτριβής should only recently be recognized in two articles entitled "An Obscene Word in Aeschylus", AJPh. CI (1980). The first, by George L. Koniaris, (pp. 42 - 44) bases its argument on the use of ἱστός (web) in Strabo (8. 6. 20) as a pun for "penis erectus". Wm. Blake Tyrrell (pp. 44 - 46) assumes the term was coined by Aeschylus on the basis of ἱστός (mast) and the comic use of τρίβιεν for "frottage". We suggest that the sexual connotations of ἱστός (which would therefore be implicit in its compounds) were old by the time of Aeschylus. Consider Iliad I, 31 in which Agamemnon is speaking of taking Chryseis back to Argos where she will grow old

ἱστόν ἐποιχομένην καὶ ἐμὸν λέχος ἀντιόωσαν
plying the beam and sharing my bed.

The phallic implication can be seen from the juxtaposition of ἱστός to λέχος (bed), and should therefore caution us to be alert to the possible connotations of the word.

46. Op. Cit., p. 228.

47. There is an ironic contrast here with Choephoroi (vide supra p.25) in which Agamemnon is the spirit of revenge.

48. The Daemon has faded out of her, her exultation gone. She is left with only her own strength, exhausted and desiring peace.
(Murray, p. 231.)

49. Kitto, p. 77.

50. 1489 - 96, which is repeated at 1513 - 20:

ἰὼ ἰὼ βασιλεῦ βασιλεῦ,
πῶς σὲ δακρύσω;
φρενὸς ἐκ φιλίας τί ποτ' εἶπω;
κεῖσαι δ' ἀράχνης ἐν μιάσματι τῷδ'
ἀσεβεῖ θανάτῳ βίον ἐκπνέων.
ὤμοι μοί, κοίταν τάνδ' ἀνεπέρθεραν,
δολίῳ μόρῳ δαμείς
ἑᾷ χερὸς ἀμφιτόμῳ βελέμνῳ.

Alas, king, oh, my king,
How shall I weep for you?
What shall I ever say from my friendly mind?
There you lie in this spider's web
Your life gasped out in dishonoured death,
ah me, on this bed not fit for a free man
subdued in treacherous fate
by a two-edged weapon in a hand.

CHAPTER IV

LAMENTATIONS

We have reviewed those amoebaeans which fulfill the necessary strictures imposed by Aristotle's definition of the kommos. As such only those amoebaeans which are indubitably threnodic in that they are true "totenklage", or laments over the dead have been considered.

There remain, however, the great majority of the amoebaeans which occur in the surviving works of Aeschylus which are not laments over the dead. These may be found to be of two types. First, an almost transitional type of amoebaean which contains either a lament dealing with a death which is to happen or a lament of more general character in which death or fear of death need not be a factor motivating the dramatic interchange between the actor and chorus. Second, there are those amoebaeans which do not even contain elements of lamentation.

The present chapter treats of the first type of these remaining amoebaeans.

> There exists, and is really characteristic of Tragedy, what we could call the derived threnos, already mentioned, in which the lament is not for a dead man but generally for an unhappy event. 1.

The permutations of the derived threnos may seem to be endless. There are, for example, those in which death is imminent (Aga. 1072 - 1177), those in which death has occurred but is not specifically being lamented and all those which treat of some personal misfortune, sorrow or unfortunate event. Thus there remains in this type of amoebaean a sense of lamentation which is a wider application of the term threnody.

It should then be mentioned at the outset that the inclusion of any amoebaean under a general heading such as has necessarily been

made must be totally subjective and arbitrary. It has therefore been our intent to effect this division by keeping in mind the separation of "totenklage" and "derived threnos" with due respect to the opinions of Cornford and Diehl. It will be seen how very fine a distinction this can involve and how very unsatisfactory any resolution of this division must be.

We have said that this type of amoebaean is "transitional" or "derived". More precisely, these are derived since they proceed from the denotation of threnody as a lament, yet do not have exactly the same sense as those threnodies which are laments for or over the dead. These amoebaeans are transitional in that they mark a passing from the more rigidly defined threnos to an expanded definition. Perhaps they are truly transitional in their application to this study because they serve as a point between the kommos as "Totenklage" and the amoebaean which contains little or no trace of lamentation. The expansion of the term threnos is critical to our discussion of the definition of the kommos and is relevant to our understanding of the role and development of the amoebaean form in the drama.

Agamemnon 1072 - 1177

This part of the "Cassandra Scene" most acutely represents how subtle the distinction between threnos and derived threnos can be. Diehl classifies it as a kommos while Cornford lists it as a "Complaint". The reason for this latter classification is that Cornford sees only a "metaphorical application"[2] of the term threnos in such cases. This is almost certainly over-restricting the application of threnos: death is very much one of the prime concerns of this passage. It would seem then, almost to be begging the issue to exclude this as a kommos simply

because the death to which it alludes has not occured. Such pedantic considerations did not intimidate Wiehl. Although in its strictest sense this may be a derived threnos, it is dramatically and logically a real transition towards the derived type. This is the only case in Aeschylus of what Adrados calls an "autothrenos" [3]. In fact, this type of lamentation occurs only once each in Sophocles and Euripides, in both cases under situations in which mourners would not be found after the death had taken place [4].

Dramatic Situation

Agamemnon has returned from Troy with his captive, Cassandra, the unbelieved prophetess of her city's destruction. Clytemnestra has led him into the palace over a carpet of rich tapestries to celebrate sacrifices of Thanksgiving. Cassandra, left alone with the chorus, is seized by a prophetic frenzy which begins with a vision of the past and leads to the impending deaths of herself and Agamemnon.

Metrics

This part of the scene consists of seven sets of strophes. In the first four sets Cassandra rants in dochmiac metre [5] while the chorus responds in iambs. From the fifth set onwards Cassandra tends towards increasingly regular iambs.

Nakamura observes that this is "spectacular" in that "the lyrics fall to the actor" [6]. Certainly the dramatic effect must have been out of the ordinary: Cassandra interrupts her long silence and clad in her prophetic robes dances and sings of death past and to come against the background of an uncomprehending, and presumably immobile chorus. This may be, as Nakamura suggests, the germination of "a tendency that gained full power later on in Euripides, to make a popular show-piece out of the actor's song" [7]. Certainly it was not

normal stage practice: often the lyrics would be shared or even more freely, but the chorus (as its name's derivation suggests) would have danced the lyrics.

The nature and the subject matter of this passage are inextricably bound to the definition of kommos and to our understanding of that form and the uses to which it might be put.

The scene is indeed spectacular and several points must be mentioned to aid comprehension of it, for its purpose is not simply to create "a popular show-piece" but to develop the theme of the drama itself.

The scene begins with Cassandra breaking her long silence with lamentations and the chorus commenting in its lack of comprehension [8].

Κα. ὀτοτοτοτοῖ πόποι δᾶ.
ὤπολλον ὤπολλον.
Χο. τί ταῦτ' ἀνωτότυξας ἀμφὶ Λοξίου;
οὐ γὰρ τοιοῦτος ὥστε θρηνητοῦ τυχεῖν.
Κα. ὀτοτοτοτοῖ πόποι δᾶ.
ὤπολλον ὤπολλον.
Χο. ἤδ' αὖτε δυσφημοῦσα τὸν θεὸν καλεῖ
οὐδὲν προσήκοντ' ἐν γόοις παραστατεῖν.
Κα. ὤπολλον ὤπολλον,
ἀγυιᾶτ', ἀπόλλων ἐμός.
ἀπώλεσας γὰρ οὐ μόλις τὸ δεύτερον.
Χο. χρήσειν ἔοικεν ἀμφὶ τῶν αὐτῆς κακῶν.
μένει τὸ θεῖον δουλίαι περ ἐν φρενί.
Κα. ὤπολλον ὤπολλον,
ἀγυιᾶτ', ἀπόλλων ἐμός.
ἆ, ποῖ ποτ' ἦγαγές με; πρὸς ποίαν στέγην;
Χο. πρὸς τὴν Ἀτρειδῶν. εἰ σὺ μὴ τόδ' ἐννοεῖς,
ἐγὼ λέγω σοι. καὶ τάδ' οὐκ ἐρεῖς ψύθη.

CASS. Woe, woe on the earth.
Apollo, oh, Apollo.
CHOR. Why do you call out these things upon Loxias?
For he is not such as to chance upon a mourner.
CASS. Woe, woe on the earth.
Apollo, oh, Apollo.
CHOR. And again she calls in words of ill-omen on the god
who is not fitting to take part in lamentation.
CASS. Apollo, oh, Apollo
of the streets, my ruin.
For you have utterly destroyed me a second time.

CHOR. It seems she will be prophetic about her own misfortunes;
the divine ability remains in her slavish mind.
CASS. Apollo, oh, Apollo
of the streets, my ruin.
Where, ah, where have you led me? To what kind of house?
CHOR. To that of the Atreidae; if you do not know this
I shall tell you; and you will not say these things are false. (1089)

There is an aspect ot the role of Cassandra which is a variant of the 'messenger': in this sense her purpose is to provide information about what is to take place. By virtue of her prophetic gift she can foretell the action rather than report it after the fact. The sense of foreboding and the mood of doom, which has tormented the Chorus during the return of Agamemnon and the "Carpet Scene" is thus increased with terrible urgency. What had been merely a premonition of evil should have become absolute certainty during Cassandra's visions.

These visions are themselves a progression which recount the story of the house of Atreus and elucidate upon the doom awaiting it and herself. Her first thoughts are of Apollo, the god of prophecy and the god whom she has betrayed. He has become the source of her destruction who was once her lover. She links her doom with that of the house to which she has come and sees a vision of what has happened in the house. This vision gives way to a vision of the death of Agamemnon. It is a very clear and particular vision which is followed by laments for herself. She foresees that with the death of her protector (Agamemnon) her own fate is sealed. Finally her thoughts return to Troy: to the "marriage" of Paris and the sacrifices which Priam offered in vain. These are the final images affecting and forecasting her destruction. If it had not been for the "marriage" of Paris (ie. the rape of Helen) Troy would not have fallen. Priam fell while offering sacrifice, sacrifice which

offered "no healing help" to prevent Troy "from suffering as it had to" (1171). Cassandra's mantic frenzy has run its course from the source of her destruction (Apollo and her capture after the fall of Troy) to a vision of her death. Running tangentally to this is the source of Agamemnon's doom (his ancestral guilt and his capture of Troy) and a very clear vision of his death.

The Chorus, although it has a premonition of foreboding, is "at a loss how it will end" (1177). The Chorus is a victim of the curse Apollo has placed on Cassandra that no one should believe her prophecies. Thus subtlely has Aeschylus made a circular construction of this song. It began by naming Apollo as the source of Cassandra's ruin and ends with her foretelling that ruin. The Chorus, because it is a victim of Apollo's curse, unwittingly emphasizes how completely that curse is being brought to fulfillment.

The question must now be raised as to whether this passage is a kommos. Certainly it is ἀμοιβαῖα, thus any exclusion of it from consideration as a kommos must depend upon the definition of the word threnody. It has already been observed [9] that there is valid cause to expand the definition of θρῆνος to include more general laments than those which are made over a corpse. To recapitulate, let us state that such an expanded definition seems to have been current in the time of Aeschylus (hence certainly at the time of Aristotle) and that Aeschylus himself seems to have regarded this passage as a threnody. At line 1322 Cassandra refers to singing "my very own threnody" (θρῆνον ... ἐμὸν τὸν αὑτῆς). The passage quoted above shows many instances of words which are common to lamentation, words which are certainly threnodic in their intent and nature.

By virtue of the fact that this is not a lament over a corpse the passage cannot be classified as a "Totenklage". Death, however, is the primary concern of Cassandra's song and she does most assuredly lament that which is about to occur. That a lament for the dead should be sung by the victim herself is both logically and dramatically suitable in this particular case. Cassandra alone knows of her impending doom, she has even experienced it in her prophetic state [10]. As a foreigner of no importance to the people of Argos, there will be no one to give her the proper rites after her death and no one to sing her funeral dirge. Only Cassandra knows this, and she provides the knowledge as her final, although unspoken, prophecy.

This study must now consider those amoebaeans in which the meaning of threnody cannot be understood by "Totenklage". In the passages which follow there is definitely a more extended definition of θρῆνος than is accepted by Cornford. Death is not involved either directly nor as anything but a remote possibility.

Emenides 777 - 891

This passage is classed as a kommos by Diehl but all reference is omitted by Cornford. As in the previous example there is interaction and discussion in which the actor attempts to make the Chorus comprehend, but again the Chorus seems to be deaf to the actor, although for different reasons. Despite Cornford's ommission, this composition is included at this point since its mood and language are that of lamentation.

Dramatic Situation

Orestes has been acquited of the murder of Clytemnestra and has left promising Argos' eternal friendship to Athens. The Chorus

has already threatened evil to Athens if they are unsuccessful in their case:

> καὶ μὴν βαρεῖαν τήνδ' ὁμιλίαν χθονὸς
> ξυμβουλός εἰμι μηδαμῶς ἀτιμάσαι
>
> And lest it be a heavy weight on the country, I am
> an advisor that this company should not be dishonoured.
> (712)

It remains for Athena to induce the Chorus to abandon their threats and leave her city at peace.

Metrics

The composition consists of four iambic epirrhemata alternating with the dochmiac and iambo-dochmiac lyrics of the Chorus. Strictly speaking the lyrics do not constitute a strophic system since the metrical correspondence is the result of exact literal repetition. Thus the four lyrics are in reality only two which have been repeated. The dochmiac metre is again used to convey intense emotion and a mood of great distress.

The first stanza of the Chorus fully expounds their intent and the reasons for their proposed action.

> ἰὼὼ θεοὶ νεώτεροι, παλαιοὺς νόμους
> καθιππάσασθε κἀκ χερῶν εἵλεσθέ μου.
> ἐγὼ δ' ἄτιμος ἀ τάλαινα βαρύκοτος
> ἐν γᾷ ταῖδε, φεῦ,
> ἰὸν ἰὸν ἀντιπενθῆ μεθεῖσα καρδίας
> σταλαγμὸν † χθονὶ
> ἄφορον, ἐκ δὲ τοῦ
> λειχὴν ἄφυλλος ἄτεκνος, ὦ Δίκα Δίκα
> πέδον ἐπισύμενος
> βροταφθόρους κηλῖδας ἐν χώρᾳ βαλεῖ (
> στενάζω. τί ῥέζω;
> γελῶμαι. δύσοιστ' ἐν
> πολίταις ἔπαθον.
> ἰὼ χιεγάλατοι κόραι δυστυχεῖς
> Νυκτὸς ἀτιμοπενθεῖς.
>
> Woe, newer Gods, you have ridden down the ancient
> laws and seized them from my hands;
> and I, dishonoured, wretched, heavy with hatred,

on this land, alas,
poison, the barren drop of poison causing sorrow in return
will drip from my heart upon
the land, and from itself
leafless and barren will fall the blight on the ground,
Oh, Justice, Justice,
dragging its man-killing defilement across the land.
I moan. What shall I do?
I am laughed at; afflicted I suffer
among these citizens.
Woe, great the misfortune for the daughters
of Night, sorrowing for their dishonour. (792/822)

Not only the metre but the sentence structure convey the distraction of the Chorus: the grammar is loose and frequently the thought is interrupted. Their lament is for their "dishonour" (780, 792) and the ridicule they suffer. The language is that of lamentation. The cause of their suffering is that the "newer gods" have made them dishonoured and ridiculed by taking the Erinyes' ancient privileges from them. The contrast between θεοὶ νεώτεροι and παλαιοὺς νόμους is extremely important to the theme and intent of Eumenides.

The Erinyes have been the representatives of the παλαιοὺς νόμους (ancient laws). Vengeance has been synonomous with Δίκη (Justice) under the old laws, and fear of that vengeance the constraint which has prevented man from crime (517ff.). Oresteia has, in fact, shown the unremitting suffering which is the result of this chain of vengeance: Agamemnon has paid for the crime of Atreus, the sacrifice of Iphigenia and the wanton bloodshed of the war on Troy, Clytemnestra and Aigisthus have paid with their lives as retribution for the slaughter of Agamemnon and Orestes has only escaped paying for the killing of his mother in revenge for his father's death. Orestes has escaped his own retribution through the intervention of the newer gods. The Chorus rightly observes that this marks the overthrow of the ancient law of vengeance.

If the old laws are overthrown and the ancient constraints are no longer operative, then a new law and new constraints must be dispensed. If this new dispensation is to succeed it is necessary that the Erinyes give up their ancient rights [17]. Their continuance as agents of vengeance would be a disruptive and anarchic obstacle to the operation of the new order. Indeed, their curses might destroy mankind before the new order would have a chance of effect.

Athena has recognized this difficulty:

> καὶ μὴ τυχοῦσαι πράγματος νικηφόρου,
> χωρεῖ μεταῦθις ἰὸς ἐκ φρονημάτων
> πέδοι πεδὼν ἄφερτος, αἰανὴς νόσος.
> τοιαῦτα μὲν τάδ' ἐστίν. ἀμφότερα μένειν
> πέμπειν τε †δυσπήματ' ἀμηχάνως† ἐμοί.
>
> ... and should they happen not to be successful in this case,
> the unbearable poison of their resolve will again
> come upon the land, a woeful sickness.
> For such is this matter: either way, whether I keep
> or send them off, it is a grievous thing without remedy
> for me. (481)

It is therefore necessary that the Chorus be induced to abandon its present course and this inducement is the substance of Athena's three epirrhematic speeches. Her task is twofold: the Chorus must be compelled to renounce its vengeance, and its power (for these are powerful goddesses) must be redirected. Athena attempts to soften the Erinyes through persuasion:

> οὐ γὰρ νενίκησθ', ἀλλ' ἰσόψηφος δίκη
> ἔξῆλθ' ἀληθῶς οὐκ ἀτιμίαι σέθεν.
> ἀλλ' ἐκ Διὸς γὰρ λαμπρὰ μαρτύρια παρῆν....
> ὑμεῖς δὲ μήτε τῇδε γῇ βαρὺν κότον
> οκήψητε, μὴ θυμοῦσθε....
> ἐγὼ γὰρ ὑμῖν πανδίκως ὑπίσχομαι
> ἕδρας τε καὶ κευθμῶνας ἐνδίκου χθονὸς
> λιπαροθρόνοισιν ἡμένας ἐπ' ἐσχάραις
> ἔξειν ὑπ' ἀστῶν τῶνδε τιμαλφουμένας.
>
> ... for you have not been defeated, but truly the judgement
> came from an equal ballot, not a dishonour therein;

but the lustrous evidence from Zeus himself was there...(797)
And you, do not bring down your heavy hatred on this
land, nor be angry... (801)
For I promise you most justly
seats and sanctuaries according to the rights of the land
on shining thrones by our hearths
to accept the honours done you by these citizens. (807)

Athena has thus tried to convince the Chorus that they have been neither defeated nor dishonoured. This is a matter of vital concern to these goddesses to whom dishonour and loss of rights is a kind of death. It is, perhaps, the only death that an immortal can suffer. Therefore Athena has offered them new rights and honours. The Chorus, however, is so unmoved by her persuasion that they repeat their first stanza, their "furious indictment of the younger gods" and their "curses in the name of Dikē, against the crops and children of Attica" [11]. It is as though Athena had never spoken, and understandably she replies in exasperation:

οὐκ ἔστ' ἄτιμοι.

You are not dishonoured! (824)

Her veiled suggestion that the will of Zeus has been fulfilled (797) is replaced by a clear threat:

κἀγὼ πέποιθα Ζηνί, καὶ τί δεῖ λέγειν;
καὶ κλῆδας οἶδα δώματος μόνη θεῶν
ἐν ᾧ κεραυνὸς ἔστιν ἐσφραγισμένος.
ἀλλ' οὐδὲν αὐτοῦ δεῖ. σὺ δ' εὐπιθὴς ἐμοί

And I have the trust of Zeus, what need to speak of that?
And I alone of the Gods know in which place the keys
to the house of his thunderbolts are kept.
But nothing of this is necessary. You, be obedient to me.
(829)

In response to their curses against the crops and children Athena offers the Furies "first fruits" as offerings for children and the marriage rite (834 - 35).

The Erinyes have heard her and their cry changes, although it remains one of bitter unhappiness for their treatment.

> ἐμὲ παθεῖν τάδε,
> φεῦ,
> ἐμὲ παλαιόφρονα κατά τε γᾶν οἰκεῖν,
> ἀτίετον μύσος.
> φεῦ.
> πνέω τοι μένος ⟨θ'⟩ ὅπαντά τε κοτον.
> οἷοῖ δᾶ φεῦ.
> τίς μ' ὑποδύεται πλευρᾶς ὀδύνα;
> ἄιε μᾶτερ Νύξ.
> ἀπό με γὰρ τιμᾶν δαναιᾶν θεῶν
> δυσπάλαμοι παρ' οὐδὲν ἦραν δόλοι.
>
> That I should suffer this,
> Alas,
> I, the ancient mind, to live under the earth,
> unhonoured as an abomination;
> Alas,
> I breathe fury and utter hate;
> Woe, alas;
> What is this pain which creeps under my ribs?
> Ah, Mother, Night,
> For my ancient honours are taken by the Gods
> and nothing is left me but unbearable servitude. (846/880)

Athena returns to the use of persuasion. She offers a seat in the Erechthion (855) and requests that they do not blight the land with civil war. Thus her motives are increasingly political. This will later be reflected in the final kommos in which the prayers for the welfare of Athens also become increasingly political.

The Chorus repeats the previous stanza lamenting the passage of their ancient rights. Athena concludes the kommos by reiterating the honours that will be theirs (884, 891) with special emphasis on their civil status: they will not be ἀπόξενος πέδου (banished from the land, 884) but will be γαμόρῳ (landowners, 890).

It is of interest that in this kommos the plot is actually advanced in Athena's attempt to persuade the Erinyes. In fact, however, the suasory nature of the composition is effectively condensed in the

stychomythia which follow the scene and the actual outcome remains uncertain until the beginning of the concluding bipartite lyric.

What is of immediate relevance to the drama is that Athena's speeches indicate the theme of the resultant public good which will follow from the persuasion of the Furies. As their conversion is necessary to the establishment of the new order, that order is essential to the development of mankind, as will be seen. [12] Parallel to this are the actual curses of the Erinyes, for these anticipate their later blessings in an ironic fashion. It is through this foreshadowing, both of a straightforward and ironic nature, that this kommos becomes an effective and essential part of Eumenides.

Septem (Seven Against Thebes) 203 - 244

This passage is listed by Diehl under "amoebaea" [13] and by Cornford as "Terror and Prayer". Therefore, it is not considered as a kommos by either author.

Dramatic Situation

Thebes has been surrounded by the armies of the Seven and Eteocles rebukes the women of the Chorus for their disheartening lamentations. The Chorus has foreseen the approaching fratricidal battle and is beset by fears of their city's destruction. In Eteocles' opinion these considerations can only weaken the morale of his men and the fear the Chorus has acknowledged must therefore be terminated or supressed.

Metrics

The passage is composed of three strophic sets in which the choral parts are of dochmiacs while those of Eteocles are regular triplets in iambic trimeter. Iambic trimeter is the common metre of

dialogue in tragedy and there is something of a discussion involved in this passage.

Ετ. τί οὖν; ὁ ναύτης ἆρα μὴ 'ς πρῷραν φυγὼν
πρύμνηθεν ηὗρε μηχανὴν σωτηρίας
νεὼς καμούσης ποντίῳ σὺν κύματι;
Χο. ἀλλ' ἐπὶ δαιμόνων πρόδρομος ἦλθον ἀρ-
χαῖα βρέτη θεοῖς πίσυνος ὅτ' ὀλοᾶς
νειφομένας λιθάδος ⟨ἦν⟩ βρόμος ἐν πύλαις.
δὴ τότ' ἤρθην φόβῳ πρὸς μακάρων λιτάς, πόλεος
ἵν' ὑπερέχοιεν ἀλκάν.
Ετ. πύργον στέγειν εὔχεσθε πολέμιον δόρυ.
οὐκοῦν τάδ' ἔσται πρὸς θεῶν. ἀλλ' οὖν θεοὺς
τοὺς τῆς ἁλούσης πόλεος ἐκλείπειν λόγος.
Χο. μήποτ' ἐμὸν κατ' αἰῶνα λίποι θεῶν
ἄδε πανάγυρις, μηδ' ἐπίδοιμι τάνδ'
ἀστυδρομουμέναν πόλιν καὶ στρατεύμ'
ἁπτόμενον πυρὶ δαΐῳ.
Ετ. μή μοι θεοὺς καλοῦσα βούλευσον κακῶς.
πειθαρχία γάρ ἐστι τῆς εὐπραξίας
μήτηρ †γυνὴ† σωτῆρος. ὧδ' ἔχει λόγος.
Χο. ἔστι. θεοῦ δ' ἔτ' ἰσχὺς καθυπερτέρα,...

ET. How not? Then will the sailor, leaving the stern
to go forward, not find a device for safety
when the ship is afflicted on the waves of the sea?
CHOR. But it was to the ancient images of the gods
I ran, trusting the gods when the snowy
stones were being flung against the gates.
Then in fear I gave prayer to the blessed ones, that
they would take up the defence of the city.
ET. Pray that the walls keep out the enemy spears;
is this not with the gods? But they say
that the gods of a captured city desert her.
CHOR. Never, while I live, may this assembly
of gods leave, may I never see this city
with its streets full of fugitives and
assailed by fire at the hand of an enemy army.
ET. Do not call on the gods and counsel evilly.
For obedience is the mother of success
and the wife of safety: such is the proverb.
CHOR. That is so. But stronger is the strength of god... (226)

The agitation of the Chorus is emphasized by the metre, which is effectively contrasted by the cold regularity of Eteocles's speeches. Thus the mental state of the participants in this discussion is reflected through the poetry. The mood is conveyed by the words of 'fear', 'running' and 'prayer' and by the im of flying stones and "streets full of fugitives" [14].

The Chorus speaks of its fears against the seemingly untroubled foundation of Eteocles' very regular and almost conversational iambs. What is most of interest to note at this juncture is how hollow his replies are and how void of comfort they are to the very immediate fears of the Chorus. In fact, five of Eteocles' six speeches are platitudes or have proverbial force [15]. Only once does he speak from the heart and that is to issue a command that the Chorus "be quiet and not over-fearing" (238). His speeches provide an indication of his character: this is not an innovative man, he acts, speaks and thinks according to a set pattern of behaviour. He is a martinet who can issue commands but who, secure in wealth of commonplaces that fit every occasion, has a certain narrow-minded self-righteousness. This may well foreshadow his later decision to do battle with his brother, Polyneices. Through this skillfull characterization of the major actor Aeschylus provides a glimpse of Eteocles' nature, a foreshadowing of his course of action and the knowledge of his ultimate lack of real humanity.

The amoebaean form has been used here to reveal the contrast between the truly human concerns of the Chorus and the relentless inhumanity of war as personified by Eteocles. This passage has effected characterization and by foreshadowing, has furthered the plot. Moreover it stands at the point between the proper lament of the Chorus (70 - 180) and the prayer of Eteocles for victory (271 ff.) Thus this scene effects the necessary transition from lament to prayer. Without such a transition, in which there is the intervention of a second party, there could be no resolution to the choral lament.

Nakamura suggests that the "poet has recourse to a commos-form, a more emotional way of expression, in order to express the agitation of the scene" [16]. This is true, but it does not fully explain all that Aeschylus has achieved in this case. Indeed, agitation has been expressed during the previous lament. Here it is expressed not only by the language but by the metre as well. The contrast of the Chorus' agitation and Eteocles' calmness leads the play away from the almost climactic emotion of the previous lament by reducing the dramatic tension to prepare for the true climax of Septem.

Septem 686 - 711

This passage is mentioned by Cornford as having a prevailing situation of "expostulation and entreaty". This is not a lament over the dead, rather it is a case of the amoebaean form being used for the climax of a drama.

Dramatic Situation

Eteocles has decided to meet his brother in single combat at the seventh gate. The Chorus is horrified at the potential outcome and attempts to dissuade him.

Metrics

This passage consists of two strophic sets in which the Chorus employs the dochmiac metre [17] while Eteocles again speaks in iambic trimeters. The Chorus is agitated no longer concerned with its own safety but with the decision and fate of Eteocles.

The climax occurs when Eteocles has made his decision and prepares to stand by it despite the fact that that decision is not the only alternative open to him. The Chorus has already argued that there

is another choice possible and that it would be pollution to shed the blood of a brother. Again they appeal to his sense of right and law:

> ὠμοδακής δ' ἄγαν ἵμερος ἐξοτρύ-
> νει πικρόκαρπον ἀνδροκτασίαν τελεῖν
> αἵματος οὐ θεμιστοῦ.
>
> Sharp-toothed, indeed, is the passion
> which bids you accomplish this bitter-fruited man-
> slaughter of unlawful blood. (694)

Eteocles pleads that he is the victim of the curse of his father and so is drawn to his fate (695ff.). But the Chorus objects that he will not damage his reputation and that a sacrifice will expiate the Furies. Eteocles, however, is completely resigned to his fate; no longer is he the champion of human action. The Chorus repeats that the choice is his and that God may change His attitude (705 - 8). The appeals to law, custom and reputation, however, are in vain. Eteocles, driven by his particular fate and by his lack of individuality and original thought (as discussed earlier), cannot step beyond the limits imposed by his shallow code of behaviour and will not admit another solution except the "honourable" one.

He has recourse only to platitudes as justification of his action:

> εἴπερ κακόν φέροι τις, αἰσχύνης ἄτερ / ἔστω.
> If one suffers evil, let it be without shame. 684
>
> θεῶν διδόντων οὐκ ἂν ἐκφύγοις κακά.
> When the gods have given evils, you cannot escape. 719

Thus Eteocles has directly involved himself in his own doom. By choosing wrongly he has created his own "personal guilt" [18]. He is no longer a victim of an ancestral crime, he has polluted himself with an "unlawful passion" (692).

This scene is the climax of Septem. An alternate solution is

offered and rejected. This alternative, the Chorus makes clear (699 - 701), would have engendered an alternate ending. Eteocles accepts his fate (703) and so sets the course of the denouement. At least one brother must die (681 and 718) by the other's hand. It would seem, however, that the Chorus regards the deaths of both as imminent.

> ἐπεὶ δ' ἂν αὐτοκτόνως
> αὐτοδάικτοι θάνωσι....
>
> But when they die by mutually
> slaughtering at mutual hands.... 735

The fact that this passage is climactic would almost seem to rule out an auto-t[illegible] of the type which Cassandra sings [19]. The action of the play cannot be held up to permit much further interplay between the actor and Chorus. All that can be said, has been. It remains to complete the denouement and to provide the logical "Totenklage" which ends the play. The curse on the house of Oedipus is about to be accomplished; only by the deaths of both brothers can the curse be laid to rest and that is truly the climax of the Septem.

Supplices (Suppliants) 843 - 910

This is another instance of the amoebaean being used at the climax of the play. The lament in this case is for the Chorus itself, and is, perhaps, to be expected since the Chorus is the protagonist of Suppliants. There is no threat of imminent death, nor is there a lament for a death which has occured [20]. Ironically, the lament seems to be because the Egyptian Herald had not died (843 - 6 and 866).

Dramatic Situation

The daughters of Danaus (the Chorus) have fled to Argos to avoid

being forced to marry their Egyptian cousins against their will. Danaus has just announced that the Argives are prepared to grant them sanctuary when the Herald of the Egyptian fleet arrives threatening to take the Chorus to the ship. The action of this passage occurs while Danaus has gone to secure aid.

Metrics

The text is far from certain or clear throughout most of this passage. The general metre would seem to be iambic [21]. The metre of the Chorus is far more difficult to determine since these sections are in very poor condition. Lines [illegible]5 and 870 do not admit of being dochmaic nor can they be considered iambs. One is tempted to apply what Rose says of lines 859 - 60 to the whole passage:

> metre also is here a matter of guesswork. I have nothing to suggest. [22]

It is perhaps best to view this as a mixture of metres which might be employed to produce a mood of distraction and confusion.

What is clear is the tone and theme of the song. The Chorus has reached a nadir of despair. It laments and bemoans the seemingly inescapable fate of being forced to return to Egypt to wed. This is the cause of the lament for, although the Chorus' ultimate salvation is far from assured, the members are in no danger of death. The language used by the Chorus is that of lamentation [23], but the lament approaches the level of melodrama. First, the Chorus is only in danger of marrying and second, the Chorus has no cause to refuse under either Egyptian Law nor Natural Law, since they are women. It is will alone which dictates their refusal.

This is the climax of the play. This is the moment at which the dramatic intensity is at its highest, when it appears least likely that the protagonist (the Chorus) will achieve its objective. The denouement, as befits the melodrama of the choral lament, follows most uncomfortably swiftly. In fact, if the remaining parts of the trilogy are positted [24], the denouement provides only a temporary resolution of the dilemma. The effects of Pelasgus' salvation of the Chorus are only temporary.

It would seem, then, that a method of intensifying the action of the climax was to construct the climax in an amoebaean form. Certainly, in the case of plays in which the Chorus serves as protagonist, this would be a virtual necessity. In general, the interplay between the actor and the Chorus must create a situation of high dramatic intensity which the poet could fully exploit to theatrical effect.

From analysis of the similarities in these foregoing passages, the one factor which is most readily apparent is that these amoebaeans are of a "grandiose" nature. That this should be so is hardly surprising. Dramatically, the effect of the interaction of chorus and an actor in a set piece which is sung will necessarily produce an effect which is out of the ordinary. Therefore these passages will tend to be elevated from our common conception of life.

Moreover, although it may be asserted that some of these bipartites further the plot, they do, in fact, to some extent delay the action of the play. By this is meant that they do not generally develop a conclusion to any act or set of circumstances which have preceeded them. Usually any required action or plan is undertaken before the opening of the amoebaean [25]. The amoebaean may develop

the thoughts and feelings of the participants in the action but the decision or resolution which will result in the conclusion will be made outside of the body of the amoebaean. Thus the true action of the play will be held in abeyance during the song. Rather, the bipartites develop the plot by their foreshadowing and by their delineation of character, moods, thoughts and feelings. It is significant that in all the cases here mentioned the amoebaean is followed by a passage of stychomythia. This rapid exchange between the Chorus and actor provides a deeper understanding of the questions raised by the amoebaean [26] or condenses the thoughts of the participants.

Therefore we are justified in concluding that the lyric in some way stands outside the actual body of the play. This reinforces what has been said about amoebaeans being elevated or removed from our common conception of life, as they are removed from the action of the play.

The passages just considered uni[illegible]ly [illegible] by a language which is characteristic of lamentation. [illegible] of lamentation are frequently used and the mood is always one of sadness, usually for a personal misfortune. Thus they are threnodic in the sense that a threnody can be a simple lament. If this definition can be accepted, and in view of the prevailing usage in the time of Aeschylus there seems no reason why we should not, these passages should be considered as kommoi.

For the present, let us accept that the kommos originated as a funeral lament. Since the Chorus was essential to Aeschylean drama, it would have been absolutely impossible to ignore its potential uses in interacting with the actor. Therefore it was necessary that at points

of high emotion and at climaxes the form of the kommos would be employed to provide a more elevated expression. Thus the so called "derived threnos" would have originated.

In fact, it is not a "derived threnos" at all. Rather, in the cases studied, it is a true kommos but one which depends on a definition of the term that is not unnaturally limited to "Totenklage".

Footnotes

1. Adrados, p. 82. "Already mentioned": "In a wider sense a song of grief which does not involve a death is called a threnos", p. 77

2. Op. Cit., p. 44.

3. "The threnos may even be sung by a hero or heroine who is going to die, for him or herself". Adrados, p. 85.

4. Sophocles, Antigone, 806ff. and Euripides, Andromache, 1166ff. These are cases in which a future death seems imminent, whereas the other autothrenoi are for merely unhappy situations.

5. Dochmiac and iambo-dochmiac metre is exceedingly common in tragedy, and to a much greater extent than any other metrical type appears to have a definite emotional connotation. All three tragedians use it freely to express strong feeling, grief, fear, despair, horror, excitement, occasionally triumph or joy. . . In ἀμοιβαῖα or 'responces' the impassioned dochmiacs of the one party may beat against the other's calmer spoken trimeters. . . but curiously enough several of the most passionate or exalted solo-lyrics are just those in which dochmiacs and trimeters are mixed, as in the Cassandra scene, Ag. 1072 - 1177.
A.M. Dale, The Lyric Metres of Greek Drama, Cambridge: University Press, 1968, p. 110f.
The Staccato rhythm of dochmiacs makes them suitable for the expression of violent emotions, especially fear and despair. Here then we have one lyric meter which, unlike most of the others discussed, can be associated with a particular mood or sentiment. . . the dochmiac is the only lyric meter of which it can be said that it is calculated to evoke a particular emotional response.
Thomas G. Rosenmeyer, Martin Ostwald and James W. Halporn, The Meters of Greek and Latin Poetry, New York, Bobbs-Merrill Co. Inc., 1963, p. 51.

6. Op. Cit., p. 13.

7. Idem.

8. We have included in the text the [illegible] two strophes and their translation since these fit the [illegible] of the song and contain certain words and phrases which [illegible] essential to our argument. Note particularly the [illegible]ent words of lamentation used by Cassandra and the occurance of θρηνητοῦ (1075).
We include here a fuller schematic of the song than is permitted in the body of this work as an aid to comprehension:
Str. & Ant. α: Cassandra laments in dochmiacs, calling on Apollo while the Chorus objects that he is not a god for lamentation.

Str. β: Cass.(dochmiacs), punning on the similarity of "Apollo" and "ruin" accuses the god of her destruction. The Chorus (iambs) comprehends that she is in a prophetic state.
Ant. β: Cass. (dochmiacs), asks to what kind of house she has been brought, thus linking her destruction with that of the house. The Chorus tells her that it is the house of Atreus.
γ: Cass. (dochmiacs) sees a vision of death and butchered children. The Chorus (iambs) accepts her as a prophet but rejects her prophecy of the past.
δ: Cass. (iambo-dochmiacs) relates an accurate vision of how "she" will slaughter "her husband" in the bath. Chorus absolutely cannot comprehend.
ε: Cass. (dochmiacs and iambs) expands her vision: the net, the murderous wife, the bath and the axe. The Chorus (iambs) understands that there is evil intent but cannot particularize.
ζ: Cass. (Primarily iambs, some iambo-dochmiac, opening line is iamb/bacchic/dochmiac) Foretells her death by a two-edged weapon. The Chorus believes she is raving in prophecy but cannot understand.
Str. η: Cass. (iambo-dochmiac) laments the marriage of Paris and sees herself standing on the banks of the infernal rivers. The Chorus has understood the allusion to Paris, but while congratulating itself on its comprehension misses the implication of the mention of the rivers of the underworld.
Ant. η: Cass. laments Troy and the sacrifices which her father made before the wall which "[illegible] no healing help". This may call to mind the sacrifices which are being made within the house by Agamemnon. The Chorus is completely baffled and admits itself to be "without device how it will end".

9. pp. 11 - 13.

10. There is an interesting modulation in the metres of her song. She begins in frantic dochmiacs and progresses into iambo-dochmiacs of increasingly higher iambic content as she comes closer to the visions of immediate death. This seems to suggest a growing resignation on her part and an attempt to communicate her prophesies more clearly to the Chorus. The final strophe is less clear and more emotional and the dochmiac content again increases.

11. Conacher, D.J.; "Interaction between Chorus and Characters in the Oresteia"; AJPh. 95; p. 341.

12. pp. 113ff.

13. From this point it is to be assumed that Diehl considers any passage in question as ἀμοιβαῖα unless otherwise noted.

14. Fear: 204, 214, 238, 240. Running (confusion): 211, 239 - 40. Prayer: 214, 216, 228 - 29, 230 - 31 and the prayer contained in 219 - 22.

15. Proverbs: the image of the sailor (208 - 10), 225 (referring to what he has just said):
ὧδ' ἔχει λόγος. (Such is the proverb or story).
Ironically the Chorus responds to this with a platitude:
ἔστι. θεοῦ δ' ἔτ' ἰσχὺς καθυπερτέρα
That is so; but stronger is the strength of god (226).
and lines 217 - 18:
ἀλλ' οὖν θεοὺς
τοὺς τῆς ἁλούσης πόλεος ἐκλείπειν λόγος.
but it is said
that the gods of a captured city desert her.
Platitudes: τοὐτῳ γὰρ Ἄρης βόσκεται, φόνῳ βροτῶν.
For Ares feeds on this: the slaughter of mortals. (244)
σὸν δ' αὖ τὸ σιγᾶν καὶ μένειν εἴσω δόμων
but your part is to keep silent and remain indoors. (232)
This is reminiscent of the statement of Pericles that it is the glory of a woman to be spoken of neither for praise nor blame. The use of platitudes is not unusual in tragedy, what is remarkable is their frequency in this passage.

16. p. 12.

17. Vide supra, fn. 6.

18. See D.M. Leahy, "The Role of Cassandra in the Oresteia of Aeschylus", Bulletin of the John Rylands Library 52 (1969), esp. p. 174, and Albin Lesky, "Decision and Responsibility in the Tragedy of Aeschylus", JHS. 86 (1966), p. 83 f.

19. The situation is similar since Eteocles too has accepted his fate and seems to anticipate death. His anticipation, however, is not the same as Cassandra's certain knowledge. Moreover, Eteocles has survivors who can provide his funeral rites and dirge.

20. The use of δάμναμαι (905) is metaphorical and should probably be translated here as "forced, broken or overpowered" rather than "killed or struck dead". This is the contrast with ὀλοίμαν (Choe. 438) in Orestes' wish to die. Vide Supra, p.

21. Certainly the Herald's lines from 872 onwards are iambic and very little of this section is in doubt.

22. H.J. Rose, A Commentary on the Surviving Plays of Aeschylus, Amsterdam, N.V. Noord-Hollandsche Uitgevers Maatschappij, 1957, p. 71.

23. αἰαῖ αἰαῖ (866), οἰοῖ οἰοῖ (876) and
ὀτοτοτοτοῖ
μᾶ Γᾶ μᾶ Γᾶ †βοᾶν†
φοβερὸν ἀπότρεπε
ὦ βᾶ Γᾶς παῖ Ζεῦ.

Woe, oh woe,
Cry Earth, Mother Earth,
Turn away this fear,
O King, son of Earth, O Z 9 - 92 and 899 - 902)

24. In the second play the Chorus to marry and in
the third Hypermnestra is de Aphrodite and acquited
of breaking her oath. Suggest Seth G. Benardete,
"The Suppliant Maidens", Aeschylus II, University of Chicago
Press, 1956, p. 3.

25. As we have seen in Sept. 684ff. where Eteocles' course of
action is set by line 673.

26. See Aga. 1202 - 13 in which the stychs explain why Cassandra
is cursed by Apollo (see Leahy, pp. 164ff.). See also
Sept. 714 which condenses everthing the Chorus has said into
one line:
μὴ ἔλθῃς ὁδοὺς σὺ τάσδ' ἐφ' ἑβδόμαις πύλαις.
Do not go on this road to the seventh gate.

CHAPTER V

SONGS OF EMOTION

There exists a group of amoebaeans in which lamentation does not figure in any predominant degreee. These dramatic interchanges seem to focus on the emotions of the participants rather than any real mood of sorrow and misfortune. Indeed, although the events with which they are concerned are far from happy, the difference in their character is noted not only by the mood which pervades them but also by the absence of the language and words of lamentation.

These may be regarded as "derived threnoi' ce they cannot be fitted into our scheme even by extending the term "threnos" to include a more general type of lament than a funereal dirge. For these reasons it seems wise to regard them as a seperate type of amoebaean.

Prometheus Bound 128 - 192

As Agamemnon 1072 ff. provided a transition from the "Totenklage" type of kommos to a more general threnody, so this passage is a transition toward the non-threnodic amoebaean. This composition begins in the lamentation of Prometheus but it moves to a sense that is almost triumphant.

Dramatic Situation

Prometheus, chained to a rock in the Caucasus by Hephaestus at the command of Zeus, has heard the sound of approaching beings. The daughters of Oceanus (the Chorus) enter, flying, to assuage his fears that someone has come intent on mocking him.

Metrics

The composition consists of two strophic systems in Aelo-

choriambic m[illegible]erspersed with the four anapaestic epirrhemata of Prometheus.

It is peculiar to this play, alone of all Greek tragedy, that the parados should be constructed in bipartite form. It is, moreover, contrary to our expectations that, given this structure, the marching anapaests should fall to the stationary actor rather than the chorus. The resolution of this is probably to be found in the strictures imposed by the dramatic setting. Prometheus, having just broken the silence he has kept during his enchainment, cannot be ignored by the Chorus, his presence is dominant on the stage and is the motivation for the Chorus' entrance. Rather than maintain another imposing silence, Prometheus interacts with the Chorus from the outset. It is a stroke of genius to give the traditional anapaests to Prometheus and have the Chorus enter in flight to a lyric metre. The effect of the entire composition is extraordinary: the use of the kommatic form, the traditional entrance rhythm chanted by a stationary actor, the flight of a semi-divine, unshod (135) Chorus into the orchestra and the necessarily bizarre costumes of that Chorus would all combine to produce an effect as splendid in its theatricality as it is provoking in its originality. Aeschylus was never afraid of the unusual effect.

No reference is made to this passage by either Diehl or Cornford. The omission is the more remarkable since Diehl does list amoebaeans as distinct from kommoi, yet this passage, which is clearly amoebaean, is passed over. This omission is perhaps because this is the only parados in extant tragedy which has been constructed in the bipartite form. The use of the form is so unusual as to obscure the very fact of its use.

Kitto's view of Prometheus is apropos:

> It is a drama of revelation, not action; of increasing tension in a situation which does not move. 1

It depends for its dramatic action on the progressive revelations which are developed through the interactions of Prometheus and the minor characters. The Chorus cannot ignore Prometheus.

Prometheus' fear of the unknown group which approaches and its potential mockery is at once put to rest.

> μηδὲν φοβη-
> θῇς. φολία γὰρ ἥδε τά-
> ξις πτερύγων θοαῖς ἁμίλ-
> λαις προσέβα τόνδε πάγον.
>
> Fear not,
> for in friendship this company
> on swift rivalry of wings
> comes to this mountain.... (130)

The Chorus is sympathetic and Prometheus permits himself the luxury of a self-lament:

> αἰαῖ αἰαῖ....
> δέρχθητ' ἐσίδεσθ' οἵῳ δεσμῷ
> προσπορπατὸς τῇδε φάραγγος
> σκοπέλαις ἐν ἄκροις
> φρουρὰν ἄζηλον ὀχήσω.
>
> Alas, alas,.... (136)
> look, see in what chains
> pinned down on this cleft
> on this high look-out
> I mount my unenviable watch. (143)

These are his only words of lamentation and there is something hollow in them. The lament seems empty, almost objective, it is for the benefit of his observers. If he has any real self-feeling it is because of the blow his pride has suffered:

> νῦν δ' αἰθέριον κίνυγμ' ὁ τάλας
> ἐχθροῖς ἐπίχαρτα πέπονθα.

But now the wretched plaything of the winds,
I endure being a delight to my enemies. (159)

If his lament is empty of all but vanity, it is not without its effect upon the Chorus. From their sympathy they are lead to blasphemy against Zeus:

νεοχμοῖς δὲ δὴ νόμοις
Ζεὺς ἀθέτως κρατύνει

.... but by laws which are innovations
Zeus governs lawlessly. (150)

. οὐδὲ λήξει
πρὶν ἄν ἢ κορέσῃ κέαρ ἢ παλάμαι τινὶ
τὰν δυσάλωτον ἕλῃ τις ἀρχάν.

.... nor shall he stop
before he satisfies his heart or by some device
someone siezes that hard-to-capture rule. (167)

This gives Prometheus his chance. The Chorus has so compromised their integrity that they can be made party to his great secret: the secret which will free him from his punishment. They have inadvertantly stumbled upon the reason that Zeus will need Prometheus, the fear of someone capturing Zeus' rule. Prometheus' laments give way to snide exultation.

ἦ μὴν ἔτ' ἐμοῦ καίπερ κρατεραῖς
ἐν γυιοπέδαις αἰκιζομένου
χρείαν ἕξει μακάρων πρύτανις,
δεῖξαι τὸ νέον βούλευμ' ὑφ' ὅτου
σκῆπτρον τιμάς τ' ἀποσυλᾶται.

Yes, for me, even though I am overcome,
tortured in fetters,
the president of the blessed will have need,
to show the new plot by which
he will be robbed of his sceptre and honour. (171)

It is thus that the first clue to Prometheus' future freedom and reconciliation with Zeus is revealed [2]. The amoebaean form is utilized both dramatically, as we have indicated above, and as an essential part of the development of the plot. This unelaborated

statement is the first in a series increasingly articulated indications of Prometheus' future which culminates in his prophesy to Io. Io will be most directly concerned since it is her descendant, Heracles, who will free Prometheus. Thus, Aeschylus begins the "carefully arranged relations... of increasing tension" [3] which constitute the drama.

Supplices 348 - 406 [4]

Cornford has listed this as having a prevailing mood of "Entreaty". This is correct if the necessity of a threnodic element is admitted to be a constituant of the kommos. There is, in fact, not an element in this passage which can be associated with lamentation.

Dramatic Situation

The Chorus has come to Argos to flee impending marriage with their cousins, the sons of Aegyptus. They seek the protection of the Argives under their claim of kinship to Io. Pelasgus, king of Argos, in uncertain how to proceed since he sees there is a conflict of laws and that there is a very real possibility of war with the Egyptians if he should honour the Chorus' request for sanctuary.

Metrics

The passage consists of three strophic sets of dochmiacs while Pelasgus responds in five line groups of iambic trimeter.

This passage presents a crux in the plot; it elucidates Pelasgus' dilemma. The Chorus presents him with a problem. The laws of the suppliant demand that he protect the Chorus but, in fact, the Chorus has no legitimate reason, which is clearly stated, not to wed. Under Egyptian law there is no impediment in the marriage, nor is there serious objection offered by Greek law. The claim to Argive protection on the grounds of kinship to Io is specious since both the Chorus

and their pursuers are descendants of Io. The true dilemma hinges on the fact that Pelasgus cannot deny sanctuary to the Chorus yet there is nothing which legally gives them the right of refusal to the marriage. There is no law or custom which Pelasgus can offer as extenuation or justification of his giving asylum to these foreigners except the fact that they have approached the altars of his land. To accept them as suppliants is to brave war with Egypt, and it would be comforting to have justice on his side. Where justice lies is a moot point.

Βα. εἴ τοι κρατοῦσι παῖδες Αἰγύπτου σέθεν
νόμῳ πόλεως, φάσκοντες ἐγγύτατα γένους
εἶναι, τίς ἂν τοῖσδ' ἀντιώθῃναι θέλοι;
δεῖ τοί σε φεύγειν κατὰ νόμους τοὺς οἴκοθεν,
ὡς οὐκ ἔχουσιν κῦρος οὐδὲν ἀμφὶ σοῦ.
Χο. μή τί ποτ' οὖν γενοίμαν ὑποχείριος
κράτεσιν ἀρσένων. ὑπάστρῳ δέ τοι
μήχαρ ὁρίζομαι γάμου δύσφρονος
φυγᾷ. ξύμμαχον δ' ἑλόμενος Δίκαν
κρῖνε σέβας τὸ πρὸς θεῶν.
Βα. οὐκ εὔκριτον τὸ κρῖμα. μή μ' αἱροῦ κριτήν.
σίπον δὲ καὶ πρίν, οὐκ ἄνευ δήμου τάδε
πράξαιμ' ἄν, οὐδέ περ κρατῶν, μὴ καί ποτε
εἴπῃ λεώς, εἴ πού τι μὴ τοῖον τύχοι,
"ἐπήλυδας τιμῶν ἀπώλεσας πόλιν."
Χο. ἀμφοτέροις ὁμαίμων τάδ ἐπισκοπεῖ
Ζεὺς ἐτερορρεπής, νόμων εἰκότως
ἄδικα μὲν κακοῖς, ὅσια δ' ἐννόμοις.
τί τῶνδ' ἐξ ἴσου ῥεπομένων μεταλ-
γὲς τὸ δίκαιον ἕρξαι;

KING. But if the sons of Aegyptus rule you
by the custom of the state, claiming to be nearest
of kin, who would wish to oppose them?
It is necessary for you to plead according to the laws
of your home,
how they do not have authority over you in any way.
CHOR. May I never be subject to the power
of any man; and under the stars
I determine my remedy, escape from a malignant
marriage. Take Justice as an ally,
choose the reverence which is with the gods.
KING. The decision is not well-ordered: do not choose me as
judge.
And even before I said I would not do this without

> the people, even though I have the power. May no one ever say, if it should not happen to turn out: "Honouring foreigners you destroyed the city".
> CHOR. Inclining towards both equally, Zeus surveys these things, dispensing equally punishment to the evil and what is holy to the upright. Since these things incline equally, why do you keep from taking that which is just? (387 - 406)

Pelasgus hesitates to act. To grant asylum is to cause war, to fail to do so is to dishonour suppliants. He has the power to act (399), but will not, either from weakness or from an almost democratic principle. The reason is not important, nor can it be resolved within the framework of this one play; there may have been a reason for his inability to render a decision which had implications to the rest of the trilogy, but such speculation is not essential to understanding at this point.

Pelasgus is right: there are two ways of viewing this situation. The Chorus is wrong: their solution is not the only one, nor is it necessarily right and just. It is, however, of vital concern to them that the action taken by the Argives be favourable to them. The outcome is in doubt and is therefore intensely important to the Chorus. The Chorus is interested only in obtaining a favourable verdict and does not have to argue in a logical or rational manner. Indeed, in the stychomythia following this passage, the Chorus resorts to extortion, threatening Pelasgus with their suicide on sacred land (457 ff). In fact the Chorus has no logical or rational point from which to argue and, again, this is Pelasgus' dilemma.

The Chorus is arguing from purely emotional grounds. They are ruined if they fail to persuade Pelasgus and as a result they are somewhat irrational. Their mood is the probable reason that the dochmiac metre is used [5]. The high emotion of the women is thus

effectively contrasted with the honest reasoning of a male, Pelasgus. The use of this metre is one of Aeschylus' methods of indicating that the Chorus' argument is emotional rather than logical. The audience would naturally associate the metre with the situation. The connotation thus evoked would reinforce the meaning conveyed by the words and the situation.

The dramatic purpose of this lyric, then, is to develop the sentiments and emotions of the participants through their interactions during the kommos. The Chorus is shown to be behaving according to the dictates of self-will and to be arguing from emotional self-interest rather than from any legal or logical basis. Pelasgus, although his reasoning is far more rational, is experiencing a true conflict in his emotions. It is one which he does not choose to resolve from his own authority but rather by reference to the populace. This is as far as the amoebaean goes towards any resolution to the dilemma posed by the Chorus.

In a sense then, this passage is an anti-climax. The result, which is so crucial to the Chorus, could go either way, and any decision undertaken will have its results which will affect the rest of the play. The dramatic importance of the situation and the emotional intensity of the participants is most effectively developed through the use of the kommatic form.

Supplices 734 - 763

This passage illustrates what we have said about the amoebaean being a more grandiose form of expression. In this case the elevation of the emotion may well be the only purpose served by the amoebaean.

Dramatic Situation

Danaus has announced that the Argives have granted his daughters asylum and protection. The Egyptian fleet is sighted and Danaus promises to bring Argive aid. The Chorus sings of its fear while Danaus tries to enhearten them.

Metrics

The passage consists of two strophic sets of the following arrangement: the Chorus speaks two lines of iambic trimeter, followed by two dochmiac dimeters, an iambic metron and a final dochmiac. At the end the Chorus has two final lines of iambic trimeter. Danaus interjects in iambic couplets. The effect is therefore chiastic, both in alternation of metre and of speaker.

The mood of terror is amply expressed in the opening line of the amoebaean.

Χο. πάτερ, φοβοῦμαι, νῆες ὡς ὠκύπτεροι
ἥκουσι, μῆκος δ' οὐδὲν ἐν μέσῳ χρόνου.
περίφοβόν μ' ἔχει τάρβος ἑτητύμως
πολυδρόμου φυγᾶς ὄφελος εἴ τί μοι.
παροίχομαι, πάτερ δείματι.

Δα. ἐπεὶ τελεία ψῆφος Ἀργείων, τέκνα,
θάρσει. μαχοῦνται περὶ σέθεν, σάφ' οἶδ' ἐγώ.

Χο. ἐξῶλές ἐστι μάργον Αἰγύπτου γένος
μάχης τ' ἄπληστον. καὶ λέγω πρὸς εἰδότα.
δορίπαγεῖς δ' ἔχοντες κυανώπιδας
νῆας ἔπλευσαν ὧδ' ἐπιταχεῖ κότῳ
πολεῖ μελαγχίμῳ σὺν στρατῷ.

Χο. μόνην δὲ μὴ πρόλειπε, λίσσομαι, πάτερ.
γυνὴ μονωθεῖς' οὐδέν. οὐκ ἔνεστ' Ἄρης.
οὐλόφρονες δ' ἐκεῖνοι, δολομήτιδες
δυσάγνοις φρεσίν, κόραικες ὥστε, βω-
μῶν ἀλέγοντες οὐδέν.

Δα. καλῶς ἂν ἡμῖν ξυμφέροι τάδ', ὦ τέκνα,
εἰ σοί τε καὶ θεοῖσιν ἐχθαιροίατο.

Χο. οὐ μὴ τριαίνας τάσδε καὶ θεῶν σέβη
δείσαντες ἡμῶν χεῖρ' ἀπόσχωνται, πάτερ.
περίφρονες δ' ἄγαν ἀνιέρῳ μένει
μεμαργωμένοι κυνοθρασεῖς, θεῶν
οὐδὲν ἐπαίοντες.

Δα. ἀλλ' ἔστι φήμη τοὺς λύκους κρείσσους κυνῶν
εἶναι. βύβλου δὲ καρπὸς οὐ κρατεῖ στάχυν.

CHOR. Father, I fear as the ships come more
swiftly, not much time is between us.
Truly, terror holds me in excessive fear,
what is the use to me of much-wandering flight?
I am exhausted, Father, with horror.
DAN. Because of the outcome of the Argive vote, my
children,
take heart; they will fight for you, I know it.
CHOR. Utterly destroyed madmen is the Egyptian race
and unsated in war. And I tell you things that are
at hand to see.
Spear-fixed and having dark-hulled
ships they sailed and so succeed in anger
with their large dark army.... (745)
Father, I pray you, do not leave us alone behind;
a woman alone is nothing, Ares is not within her.
But they, they are destructive-minded
and crafty
with impure hearts, like crows, heed-
ing no altar.
DAN. That would aid us well, my children,
if they are as hateful to the gods as to you.
CHOR. Not through fear of these tridents and awe of
the gods will they keep their hands from us, father.
And they are very over-weening in unholy
wrath, furiously-raging, dog-hearted, obey-
ing in nothing the gods.
DAN. But it is said that wolves are stronger than
dogs, and the fruit of Byblos cannot conquer wheat.
(761)

In certain ways this passage seems to hearken back to the previous bipartite and to anticipate the remaining plays of the trilogy in an ironic fashion.[6]

Again the Chorus is distracted and their thoughts seem to be rather disjointed, emotional and irrational. Certainly the dochmiac sections tend to be erratic, often moving to thoughts of the Egyptians without any logical connection to the thoughts expressed in the previous iambs. The dochmiacs about the Egyptians are almost rants and are so irrational that, as in the second strophe, it is only by the gender of the pronoun that one can determine to whom the reference is made. Whether it is women or the Egyptian that are compared to crows

would otherwise be completely obscure. In point of fact the similies used, even when the reference is clarified, are far from flattering to either party. When Danaus says that wolves are stronger than dogs (760) it can only be the Chorus which is compared to wolves, since the Chorus has just called the Egyptians "dog-hearted". There would seem to be little to choose between.

The myth of the daughters of Danaus tells that when they were finally compelled to marry, they took an oath that they would kill their husbands on their wedding night. Such women may well be compared to wolves, Ares most certainly is within them (749). Ironically, then, the rest of the myth is anticipated in this amoebaean. The greatest irony is that everything which the Chorus has said about the Egyptians may, in the light of the myth, be turned against themselves. The Chorus is as dark of skin as the Egyptian army (745), they are crafty and do not heed the altar of marriage (750 - 2), they are overweening (757) in their disregard for law and "obeying in nothing" the laws or the rites of marriage (759). Danaus himself has observed how strong the similarity is between his daughters and the objects of their hatred when he says:

> That would aid us well, my children,
> if they are as hateful to the gods as to you. (754)

If there is some dramatic purpose to this amoebaean, it lies in its relationship to the rest of the myth. Certainly the passage could easily be dispensed with if it is merely to be a more elevated expression of emotion. Dramatically there is no necessity for this passage: both Danaus and the audience already know and understand the Chorus' fear, Danaus has already decided to seek help from the Argives (726). Once again we see that the amoebaean does not advance the plot

but is rather an instant isolated from it. The dramatic intensity here is mere theatricality. In this case, it does not even provide a connection from one set-piece to another. We must conclude that either this passage is extraneous to the play or that it depends upon its relation to the earlier irrationality expressed by the Chorus and their ultimate actions. The Chorus attempts once more to justify its aversion to marriage; in so doing it only emphasises the similarity between itself and the Egyptians and so anticipates its later actions.

Persae 694 - 702

Dramatic Situation

Overcome with dread at the news of the defeat at Salamis, the Queen and the Chorus have raised the ghost of Darius from his tomb. Darius enquires as to the nature of the evil which has caused him to be invoked.

Χο. σέβομαι μὲν προσιδέσθαι,
σέβομαι δ' ἀντία λέξαι
σέθεν ἀρχαίῳ περὶ τάρβει.
Δα. ἀλλ', ἐπεὶ κάτωθεν ἦλθον σοῖς γόοις πεπεισμένος,
μή τι μακιστῆρα μῦθον ἀλλὰ σύντομον λέγων
εἰπὲ καὶ πέραινε πάντα τὴν ἐμὴν αἰδῶ μεθείς.
Χο. δίομαι μέν χαρίσασθαι,
δίομαι δ' ἀντία φάσθαι,
λέξας δύσλεκτα φίλοισιν.

CHOR. I dread to behold thee,
I dread to speak contrary things
Because of thine ancient reverence.
DAR. But since I have come from below, persuaded
by your lamemtations,
not telling some long story but succinctly
speak and be done, laying aside all your
reverence of me.
CHOR. I fear to please thee,
I fear to say contrary things
Speaking the unutterable to those who are dear. (702)

Metrics

The choral sections are ionic dimeters in which the last line contains an extra longum between the metra. The use of this metre here

> is probably meant like the Oriental robes to reinforce the impression of an un-Greek culture and code of behaviour. 7

This is an apt use. There is another peculiarity which deserves comment in this case.

> It is clear that dactyls, dochmiacs and ionics frequently run in πνίγη; in the last two indeed a whole strophe may be in effect a single 'system'. This latter technique was more easily applicable in the short stanzas of many of the Aeschylean choruses, and only Aeschylus uses ionics in this way. 8

The purpose of πνίγη was for rapid delivery, and since there is most certainly no comic overtone we would be justified in expecting that its use here is to convey the Chorus' agitation.

Of interest too is the fact that Darius' interjection is in trochaic tetrameter catalectic [9]. The iambic trimeter has been replaced down to line 758 as the regular dialogue metre of this scene. Dale observes that "the full trochaic is among the least common metres" [10] in tragedy. The effect here is very likely to be the same as that of the ionic, that is, to convey a sense of foreigness in this passage. Perhaps Aeschylus may not have viewed this as a less stately metre than the iambic since the mood here is one of grandeur. Indeed the increased length of the line and the use of the catalexis falling generally at the completion of the thought, which interrupts the 'running' nature of the trochee, might have been felt to create the opposite effect. We should not, considering Aeschylus' priority in drama and the fact that this may be the first complete tragedy we possess, attempt to

interpret his intent in any inovation with regard only to later dramas.

The only threnodic element in the amoebaean itself is Darius' statement that he has risen "persuaded by ... lamentations". The lamentations have occured before the beginning of the amoebaean. The context of the passage under consideration, however, is mournful. In this regard we should bear in mind Adrados' statement on the nature of Persae:

> The work properly speaking consists of a series of threnoi. [11]

This amoebaean should not be isolated from the scene of which it is a part, since it is closely linked to the climax, which occurs in this scene, and since the lament for Darius which preceeds the amoebaean has implications to the theme and purpose of Persae.

The non-threnodic nature of the amoebaean is commented on by Nakamura:

> Properly speaking the second commos of the Persae, v. 694 - 702, ... seems not to be called a "Totenklage". What we have here is, indeed, no lamentation over the dead, but it is a sort of communion with the dead. And the exact, even verbal correspondence between the strophe and the antistrophe adds to the ceremonious solemnity of the scene, suggesting that we have here a direct reminiscence of a ritual performance for the dead. [12]

The final clause of this statement is debatable. Helen E. Moritz has done an intensive study of the invocation by which the Chorus raise Darius from the dead [13]. The proper place for "a direct reminiscence of a ritual performance for the dead" is most likely to focus upon the necromantic charms by which the dead man is raised. It is unlikely that there would be a ritual for after his resurrection, except in an apotropaic sense to prevent harm while he is above the ground and to

dismiss him when the desired information has been imparted. Clearly the words of the Chorus are not of this type. Additionally, the antistrophe applies to Darius' questioning of the Chorus, and although one might expect a ritual to be involved in the questioning of the dead, it would be unlikely that the reverse would apply, since the purpose of necromancy is to obtain information from the dead. The ritualistic element here seems to apply to Darius' "ancient reverence", that is , his position as King of Kings. It is because of this that Darius may question his summoners and that the Chorus fears to be the bearer of bad tidings.

It is this "ancient reverence" which implies the contrast between Darius and Xerxes which is central to Persae. Age becomes the symbol of wisdom and prudence exemplified by Darius and the Chorus. Conversely, the youth and rashness of Xerxes are the primary causes of the disaster which has befallen the Persian nation.

This brings us to a consideration of the historicity of Persae. Some justification can be offered for the reshaping of history which has been necessitated by the requirements of the drama. First, it might seem from the nostalgic longing that the Chorus exhibits for Darius that the defeat at Marathon has been forgotten. What must be remembered is that however serious the defeat at Marathon may have appeared to the Greeks at the time, and however much later Athenians may have idealized that victory, it was not the end of the Persian advances on Greece. Salamis, however, marked the end of Persian naval threats and if it was not the actual end of the Persian War, it was the beginning of that end and the most serious defeat that the Persians had yet suffered. It will be seen that Aeschylus does not ignore or

even underplay the importance of the Battle of Plataea, he merely emphasizes the importance of Salamis, since Salamis and not Plataea is Athens' "finest hour".

What is being emphasized here is the contrast between what is essentially a setback at Marathon and the total catastrophe incurred by the campaign of Xerxes. Darius becomes "god like" (651, 655, 656) in comparison. Darius is a symbol of better days, however bad they were; and as Darius is a shade, so his defeats are but shades when contrasted with total calamity.

It must be noted that the catastrophe is not complete until Darius has foretold the Battle of Plataea. Here is the true climax of Persae. It is at this point that all hope is gone and the destruction wrought by Xerxes is completed. As Cassandra foretold her doom, so Darius becomes a messenger of the fate of his nation [13].

Having now some idea of its relation to the scene and the play, we can return to our consideration of the amoebaean itself. It continues the mood of "ceremonious solemnity" which emphasizes the contrast between Darius and Xerxes. Darius is referred to as an object of awe and as φίλοισιν, "those who are dear" (702). The lyric effects a transition from the invocation of Darius' spirit to the dialogue between Darius and Atossa which results in the revelation of the climax. This is done by the refusal of the Chorus to be the bearers of ill-omened news. They do this for two major reasons. First, there is the natural reticence to be the bearers of bad news, with the anathema that that attaches and second, a situation is produced by which the Chorus is freed from the taint of lese majesty. However badly the Persian nation has fared under Xerxes, he is still Great King, and anything which the Chorus might

say could easily be construed as an offence against the dignity of the soveriegn. Atossa, as daughter, wife and mother of Great Kings may say these things which the Chorus wishes, but without fear of attainder. Not only does this reduce the act to one of family concern rather than state polity, but it is more natural dramatically that this dialogue should be between two individuals who are already on stage than between an actor and chorus, leaving one mute actor on stage.

Although according to the Aristotelean definition these lyrics must be excluded from the kommoi since they are not threnodies, there are certain similarities with those passages previously studied. First, the context in which they occur tends to be sad or mournful if not specifically one of lamentation. Then too, they provide a more elevated or "grandiose" form of expressing the emotions. They occur at points of high emotion and of climax, even if not at the actual climax of the play. They provide an insight into the thoughts and characters of the participants (Sup. 348 ff.), or a foreshadowing of what is to come (Sup. 734 ff.) or they effect a transition between two elements of the drama (Per. 694 ff.) just as the more proper kommoi have been seen to do.

This interaction between actor and chorus, an amoebaean, can have other purposes besides giving vent to a lamentation. There will be some similarities of a natural type if they are to have any dramatic effectiveness, for they must be intrinsic parts of the drama. They must result from the situation which causes the interaction of the participants and are bound by the nature of that action to result in a form of expression which tends to be theatrical. This, as has been

noted, is a natural result of the interaction between an actor and a group who shares a common attitude and experience.

Footnotes

1. p. 63.

2. Excepting 1. 27 ὁ λωφήσων γὰρ οὐ πέφυκέ πω.
"For he who will release you has not yet been born". Here the context might, however, imply the impossibility of anyone ever being able to aid Prometheus. It is perhaps ironic, but not necessarily prophetic.

3. Kitto, pp. 58 - 59.

4. Diehl regards this as lines "344 - 417", and Cornford provides no termination numbering, although he does note the beginning as 347.
We suggest that a different lineation than Page's OCT., which is used here, might have been employed by both authors. There is no precident for beginning an amoebaean in a passage of stychomythia, since stychs, being dialogue, do not conform to our definition of kommos. Therefore we should rule out 347 since that is the Chorus' final stych. The fact that the Chorus does not have an iambic line before each of its dochmiac sections seems to reinforce our conclusion that 347 belongs to the preceeding (stychomythic) rather than the succeeding (kommatic) section.
In the previous examples we have seen a very tightly epirrhematic structure in which there is at least linear correspondence between the non-lyrical elements which divide the strophe from the antistrophe. If this form is followed the more logical ending occurs at 406. What ensues should then be considered a set speech in iambs by Pelasgus (to 417), a choral lyric of two strophes in cretic-paeonics (to 437) and a final speech to line 454. It is illogical to include Pelasgus' first speech in the system (as Diehl does) but bar the Chorus' next lyrics, although these are not interrupted by non-lyric passages. We are justified in including the final speech to maintain the correspondence. There are, however, enough examples of amoebaeans being followed by speeches in which the speech is distinctly not considered part of the system (Aga. 1178ff. is a case in point).
Two probable endings for the amoebaean remain: 406 or 437. The epirrhematic structure has been interrupted at 406 and the final choral section is more in the nature of a choral ode, although addressed to Pelasgus, than an amoebaean. Correspondence has also been destroyed at this point. A further indication might be the complete change of metre at 418, although this is not in itself conclusive.
In consideration of all elements of responsion and lyricism, we believe it is possible to call lines 348 - 406 a kommatic system.

5. Vide Supra, p.83 , fn. 5.

6. As far as we can approximate the remainder of the trilogy,

vide supra, p. 86 fn. 24. In any event the ironies exist in relation to the myth as we know it and must certainly, be intended to elicit this response.

7. Dale, Op. Cit., p. 124.

8. Ibid., p. 199.

9. The Trochaic tetrameter is catalectic to avoid the "equality of the two parts" (Rosenmeyer, Op. Cit., p. 15). The result of this, coupled with the fact that Trochaic means "running", would seem to be a "less stately meter than the iambic trimeter", ibid.

10. p. 91.

11. Op. Cit., p. 82.

12. Op. Cit., p. 12. Emphasis this author's.

13. "Refrain in Aeschylus: Literary Adaptation of Traditional Form", CPh. 74 (1979), pp. 187 - 195.

14. It is not inconsistent that Darius should not know the present state of affairs although he is capable of foretelling the Battles of Plataea. He relates all as part of a prophecy:

φεῦ ταχεῖα γ' ἦλθε χρησμῶν πρᾶξις, ἐς δὲ παῖς' ἐμὸν
Ζεὺς ἀπέσκηψεν τελευτὴν θεσπράτων. ἐγὼ δέ που
διὰ μακροῦ χρόνου τάδ' ηὔχουν ἐκτελευτήσειν θεούς.
Woe, quickly came this prophecy to pass, and on my child
Zeus hurled its god-given end; but I was confident
that after a long time the gods would bring this to
accomplishment. (741)

Then, before he foretells the destruction of Plataea:

εἴ τι πιστεῦσαι θεῶν
χρὴ θεσπρότοισιν ἐς τὰ νῦν πεπραγμένα
βλέψαντα. συμβαίνει γὰρ οὐ τὰ μέν, τὰ δ' οὔ
κεἴπερ τάδ' ἔστι ....
if it is right
'to trust the oracles of the gods, looking to what has now
happened: for if the one does not happen, the other will
not, and if this is the case . . . . (803)

We see that this is a causal prophecy of the type, "if this..., then this...." The first part has come to pass with the crossing of the Hellespont and the defeat at Salamis; the second (Plataea) will follow.

Darius, cut off from the world of men, knows the future from this prophecy. He does not, however, have any reference from which to judge when the future has become the present and when his prophecy begins its operation. His recall to the world has shown that the prophecy has come to pass and he can tell of the catastrophe which must ensue.

CHAPTER VI

PROBLEM "KOMMOI"

In the previous chapter we considered those cases in which the form of the passage agreed with Aristotle's definition, that is, they were κοινὸς χοροῦ καὶ ἀπὸ σκηνῆς (common to the chorus and the actor). Even the sense of these passages might be seen to be fulfilled inasmuch as the general mood of sadness and unhappy emotion might well be considered threnodic, although the language and the primary motivation were not specifically that of lamentation.

This study must now consider three passages which seem to provide more than the usual difficulties of being reconciled with the definition of antiquity. It may be noted that heretofore there have been considerable differences in the treatment accorded to some of the passages by previous commentators. This we have attempted to reconcile within the framework of this analysis, keeping in mind the shortcomings necessarily inherent in such a brief definition and the understandable discrepancies which result from the connotations of "threnody". In short, an attempt has been made to maintain a sense of fidelity to Aristotle's definition and yet give due consideration to the opinions of previous commentators.

It has not been sufficient that a passage might have been ignored by one or another or all commentators if its form and subject seemed to meet the criteria imposed by Aristotle. Nor have we left to this point to treat of those passages which admitted of the most divergent opinions among previous commentators, if a reconciliation might be effected in the course of analysis. Discussion of those passages which seem to us not to fulfill in any way the definition

of Aristotle has been deliberately left until now.

The passages we are about to consider are truly "problems". Two of these passages might well have been omitted in the present study had they not been noted in the lists of at least one commentator.

CHOEPHOROI 869 - 874

This short passage is classified by Diehl as a kommos yet is passed over by Cornford. It is more than the length of the passage which is strange. We have seen in Persae 694 ff. an extremely short bipartite, so this need not be a deterrent. It is the mood, the situation and even the form which mark this passage as unusual. Nakamura remarks:

> In contrast with these large-scale commoi, we have a very small commos-like composition in the Choephoroe v. 869 - 74. And it can be regarded as a forerunner of the astrophic commoi.... [1]

We should not dismiss this simply because it is of a form used by Euripides [2]. In Eumenides 777 - 891 Aeschylus has composed a kommos which is not strictly strophic in structure.

Orestes, determined to obtain revenge for his father's murder, has used the ruse of announcing his own death to gain access to the palace. Aegisthus has followed him in for the purpose of questioning the "messenger". The Chorus sings that the result could go either way and pray for Orestes' success. Their bias thus clearly established, the song is interrupted by a cry.

Αι. ἔ ἔ ὀτοτοτοῖ
Χο. ἔα ἔα μάλα.
πῶς ἔχει; πῶς κέκρανται δόμοις;
ἀποσταδῶμεν πράγματος τελουμένου,
ὅπως δοκῶμεν τῶνδ' ἀναίτιαι κακῶν
εἶναι. μάχης γὰρ δὴ κεκύρωται τέλος.

Aegisthus: Ah, ah, woe!
Chorus: Woe, woe, indeed.
How goes it? How has it been brought to pass in the house?
Let us stand aside until the deed is accomplished, so that we shall seem to be blameless of these evils. May the end of battle be accomplished. 3

It is this interjection which has caused this passage to be regarded as a kommos, and since it occurs during a murder and contains words of lamentation one might naturally suppose that it agrees with Aristotle's definition.

We argue that this passage does not. It is universally agreed by commentators that a kommos must be a lyric. This composition is not. The metre is iambic trimeter, a dialogue metre, and even the cry might be scanned as an iambic dipody. This is itself sufficient reason to warrant its exclusion, but there is more. If a kommos must be κοινός and even the substitution of the term amœbaean would indicate this, then surely there must be some semblance of balance or correspondence to the parts of the actor and chorus. There is none in this passage. A short cry of uncertain metrical value is followed by a dialogue passage, all of this occurring after a choral stasimon which leaves no place for participation of an actor. Lastly, there is the matter of θρῆνος. Despite the laments which begin the passage, there is really no plaint evident here. The situation is not one which admits of any particular sad emotion. On the contrary, since this marks the triumph of Orestes, the reverse is the case. The Chorus reacts in the only logical way: they are uncertain what to do until they know what has transpired. They have fully compromised their integrity during the stasimon and their wish to "stand aside ... so that we shall seem blameless" does nothing to

redeem them. The scene serves to re-emphasize the Chorus' adamant refusal to become involved, which they have shown by inciting the actors during the previous kommos, and to provide an entrance cue to the house-slave.

Taken individually none of these objections would necessarily bar this passage from our consideration. As a whole, however, they present the construct under which it can be concluded that in no particular does this coincide with Aristotle's definition nor any reasonable approximation built upon it. Had there been no cries, the composition would never have been regarded as a kommos. Rather it would have been left for what it actually is: a dialogue passage terminating a choral stasimon.

PROMETHEUS BOUND 1040 - 1093

Several of the objections which were made to the previous passage arise in consideration of the last scene of Prometheus. It is included in this work because Cornford lists the scene. His inclusion is qualified by the footnote:

> The final anapaests of the Prometheus,... ought not perhaps to be called a 'Kommos', though the Chorus take part. 4

Cornford does not explain this statement, hence it is necessary for us to determine why this section is listed only to be summarily dismissed in a footnote.

What was said about the correspondence of parts in Choe. 869 ff. also applies here, although to a lesser extent. The structure is: Prometheus (14 lines) - Hermes (9) - Chorus (8) - Hermes (9) - Prometheus (14). The Chorus, obviously does not take part in any

great degree. The beautifully balanced, chiastic passage depends far more on the interplay between Hermes and Prometheus than on any choral intervention. The choral section seems more to accentuate the chiastic structure of the actors' parts than to fulfill the type of responsion we have come to expect in a kommos [5]. The passage is therefore astrophic excepting the linear (although not metrical) responsion.

The lyricism of the composition is also of a questionable nature. The passage must be considered as anapaestic, although containing a good number of dactylic and choriambic resolutions. The anapaest is frequently used in epirrhemata as a dialogue metre. It would be extremely difficult to regard this passage as anything but a dialogue: the mood itself is dialogic. The resolutions of the metre should be regarded as indicating the increased agitation of the participants rather than as an attempt on the part of Aeschylus to inject a lyrical quality into a dialogue passage.

Because of these considerations it would seem best not to consider this composition as a kommos. Rather, it is an exodus of a definite, although unusual form. The form is almost certainly necessary to provide a kind of finality to the drama; a concluding statement in which the "defiance and threats" [6] of Prometheus hearken back to the complaints which have characterized him throughout the play.

EUMENIDES 916 - 1020 [7]

Although we have seen gradations of the applicability of the term threnos in the compositions previously studied it should be

noted that in no case have we seen one in which the primary emotion or mood was not essentially negative. The passage at hand can only be characterized as "joyful reconciliation" [8]. Unlike all other kommoi, the mood is joyous and the tone practically triumphal. For this reason the conclusion of Eumenides is regarded as a problem kommos in the light of the Aristotelean definition of the term.

The passage meets all the metrical and structural criteria. The Chorus has three strophic systems of mixed metre set against the anapaestic epirrhemata of Athena. Yet, although the form is so perfectly kommatic, the sense is not. In fact, a review of Cornford's list of kommatic passages will reveal that this is the only case in extant tragedy of the form being used in totally happy circumstances.

This is all the more remarkable when we consider that this is the culmination of not just a single play, but of the only complete trilogy which has been preserved from Antiquity. At the conclusion of an acknowledged masterpiece, a poetic form is used in a situation and mood that is totally exceptional. As such it goes contrary to every other kommos and to the derivation of the term itself.

It has been noted that it seems characteristic of the kommos that the action of the play is held in abeyance during the song and that no action is undertaken or concluded independently within the confines of the kommos. In this sense, too, the conclusion of Eumenides is uncharacteristic. For almost one hundred lines Athena has been attempting to persuade the Erinyes to give up their vendetta and not turn it against Athens. The best she has been able to obtain from them is the qualified:

θέλξειν μ' ἔοικας, καὶ μεθίσταμαι κότου.

You seem to be enchanting me, and I am freeing myself of hatred. (900)

It is, then, only at the beginning of the kommos that we discover whether Athena has succeeded and that the Erinyes make their decision:

δέξομαι Παλλάδος ξυνοικίαν

I choose the community [9] of Pallas. (916)

Athena has triumphed. She has persuaded the Furies and thus changed them from Erinyes to Eumenides (the "kindly" or "well-minded ones").

They who had shrieked curses at Orestes and the "new gods" are now so reconciled with man and God that they swear an oath to Athena and invoke blessings upon the city:

οὐδ' ἀτιμάσω πόλιν...
δυσίβωμον Ἑλλά-
νων ἄγαλμα δαιμόνων.
ἄι τ' ἐγὼ κατεύχομαι
θεσπίσασα πρευμενῶς
ἐπισσύτους βίου τύχας ὀνησίμους
γαίας ἐξαμβρῦσαι
φαιδρὸν ἀλίου σέλας.

And I shall not hold this city in dishonour ... [10] (917)
the pledged altar of the
Greeks, the glory of the divinities.
And I pray earnestly,
prophesying favourably
that the bright light of the sun
break out over the earth
outpouring the benificent fortunes of life. (925)

The progression of the systems and the epirrhemata are most important in understanding the theme of this drama and, since this is its culmination, the entire trilogy.

In response to these general blessings Athena gives the Eumenides her promise and delineates their new duties:

τάδ' ἐγὼ προφρόνως τοῖσδε πολίταις
πράσσω, μεγάλας καὶ δυσαρέστους
δαίμονας αὐτοῦ κατανασσαμένη.
πάντα γὰρ αὗται τὰ κατ' ἀνθρώπους
ἔλαχον διέπειν.

Willingly, I myself effect this for these
citizens, thoroughly crushing the great
and implacable powers of these:
for everything which affects mankind,
in short, they shall manage. (931)

The Chorus proceeds from its general benedictions to those of a more specific nature: for the fruitfulness of the earth, its fruits and flocks (938 - 47), for man as an individual (956 - 67), for man as a political being and the benefit of the polis (975 - 87):

μηδὲ πιοῦσα κόνις μέλαν αἷμα πολιτᾶν
δι' ὀργὰν ποινᾶς
ἀντιφόνους Ἄτας
ἁρπαλίσαι πόλεως,
χάρματα δ' ἀντιδοῖεν
κοινοφιλεῖ διανοίαι
καὶ στυγεῖν μιᾷ φρενί.
πολλῶν γὰρ τόδ' ἐν βροτοῖς ἄκος.

Let not the dust, drinking the black blood of citizens
through passion for retribution,
mutually-slaughtering Ate,
be eager to receive that of the city,
but let them give joys in return
being disposed to loving in common
and hating with one heart:
for this is the remedy of many things among men. (987)

"The remedy of many things among men" is what has been symbolized by the conversion of the Erinyes. They had begun as agents of vengeance, for the Gods in Agamemnon, for Agamemnon in Choephoroe and for Clytemnestra in the first part of Eumenides. Now they are the bestowers of all blessings of prosperity and guardians of the polis. The progression of their blessings has built to the climax of the political, civilized, ξυνοικία of mankind. The fear of retribution which has motivated the behaviour of man is now replaced by fear of

loss of the blessings which civilization provides, by fear of ἀτιμία. Blind revenge, which knows of no exceptions, admits of no extenuation and has no end [11], has been "thoroughly crushed" by the establishment of courts of law to judge on matters of fact and render a verdict which is retributive but does not require its own retribution [12].

This is a new thing in the world. It is a new order, exemplified by the "New Gods", rising out of the old order but requiring a complete change as symbolized by the change of the Erinyes (who represent the old order) into the Eumenides, thus becoming παῖδες ἄπαιδες: children not-children (1034).

From its very beginning the trilogy has explored the inconsistancies and inhumanities of the old order. For the establishment of mankind it has been necessary to grant a new dispensation and a new apportionment of the ancient powers. Justice must continue or man cannot dwell together. Fear of something must exert its power or man will not live in harmony. The Erinyes must be changed or anarchy and vendetta will prevail. This has been the will of Zeus.

In the second half of the play Athena is the spokesman for the will of Zeus. She has been conciliatory towards the Erinyes and impartial [13]. Although she is bound to the will of Zeus she exerts not compulsion but persuasion to effect the change on the Chorus which is necessary to the establishment of the new order.

It is thus very much to the point that directly in the centre of this composition (between the second strophe and antistrophe) Athena should deliver what is essentially an aside on the subject of the victory of Persuasion:

τάδε τοι χώραι τήμῃ προφρόνως
ἐπικραινομένων
γάνυμαι. στέργω δ' ὄμματα Πειθοῦς,
ὅτι μοι γ' ὤσσαν καὶ στόμ' ἐπωπᾷ
πρὸς τάσδ' ἀγρίως ἀπανηναμένας.
ἀλλ' ἐκράτησε Ζεὺς ἀγοραῖος,
νικᾷ δ' ἀγαθῶν
ἔρις ἡμετέρα διὰ παντός.

I am exulted at how eagerly
these things are accomplished for
my land. And I am content with the eyes of Persuasion
that watched my mouth and tongue
with respect to these ones here when they were wildly
rejecting it.
But Zeus of the Assemblies prevailed,
and our desire for good
won out in every respect. (975)

This is the acme of the trilogy. The new gods have triumphed and the will of Zeus is fulfilled in that man is no longer subject to the anarchic and wasteful dictates of vengeance. Man is free to become settled, social and to develop all the benefits of civilization. This is assured by the establishment of bodies of men which will decide and deliberate, as personified and sanctified by Ζεὺς Ἀγοραῖος. Persuasion has proven her worth on these wild and implacable beings and she will aid mankind in the future. "Our desire for good won out in every respect" calls to mind the repeated thought first expressed in Agamemnon:

αἴλινον αἴλινον εἰπέ, τὸ δ' εὖ νικάτω. (121)

Alas, sing alas, but may the good win out.

Thus at the end is the prayer fulfilled: good is the moral and political ξυνοικία of man.

The kommos closes with a double valediction from the Chorus which indicates their total reconciliation with both man and God. Aeschylus is not so jejune as to suggest that perfection has been obtained. In the midst of what might seem to be a paean of praise

to Athens, there occurs the rather surprising line:

σωφρονοῦντες ἐν χρόνῳ.

being wise in time. (1000)

This would indicate that the perfection promised is obtainable only with the passage of time.

Athena bids farewell to the Chorus, sending them to their new seats beneath the Acropolis. Thus the goddesses have truly become chthonic deities: not merely divinities of the underworld as they once were, but gods of the land they have blessed, gods who are literally at the foundation of the state. The emphasis on civilization and dwelling in concord is reiterated as she entrusts the Eumenides to a procession of citizens:

ὑμεῖς δ' ἡγεῖσθε, πολισσοῦχοι
παῖδες Κραναοῦ, ταῖσδε μετοίκοις.
εἴη δ' ἀγαθῶν
ἀγαθὴ διάνοια πολίταις.

And you, city-dwelling children
of Cranaus, lead these fellow-dwellers [14];
and of good
good be the thoughts for citizens. (1013)

Dressed in crimson robes, as was the custom for immigrants at the Panathenaea, the Eumenides are brought to their new home in triumphal procession.

In his "Introduction to Prometheus Bound" David Grene says of Oresteia:

> The conclusion with its stress on an obscure theological point and its very local emphasis on the court of the Areopagus baffles our awakened interest. 15

If the court is viewed as only the court of Areopagus, the city as only Athens and the conversion of the Erinyes as only a clever way to

account for their metamorphosis into the Eumenides, then that is likely to be our conclusion. But we hope that this study has shown that Aeschylus' intent is much wider than that. The court symbolizes all human institutions by which man may live in harmony, Athens represents civilization and man living together, and the conversion of the Furies betokens a much larger ethical problem: what restraints are best and necessary in order to secure the peace, harmony and government of man. The problem is large, and perhaps an attempt to reduce it to a few lines of commentary is as great an injustice as to dismiss it as "obscure and baffling".

Aeschylus, however, has attempted to deal with the problem in the larger context of the drama and to a great extent he has succeeded. The masterpiece concludes with a kommos of triumph, a brilliant example of Aeschylus' innovation and art. Every stanza relates to the resolution of the trilogy. Most lines recall thoughts that have been expressed earlier and show their resolution in the light of the reconciliation that has been effected. Almost every word seems to have been carefully chosen to reflect some aspect of the drama or of Aeschylus' philosophy. The synthesis of drama and philosophy is as complete and perfect as the reconciliation of the old and new orders.

It is for this reason that the use of the kommatic form is so natural and successful in this case. The representatives of the old order (The Erinyes/Eumenides) and the new (Athena) have met, argued their cases and been reconciled. The kommos is the celebration of the reconciliation. Thus on earth we see the universal reconciliation of which the processional Chorus sings:

Ζεὺς παντόπτας
οὕτω Μοῖρά τε συνκατέβα.

Thus Zeus the all-seeing
and Destiny came to agreement. (1046)

Footnotes

1. Op. Cit., p. 14.

2. Idem, pp. 19ff.

3. The attribution of parts is difficult. The note in the apparatus of the OCT. is:

> 869, 870 paragr. praefixae, 872 chori nota
> 869, 870 a paragraphus has been affixed, 872 the chorus is noted.

In other words 869 - 71 could be of almost any speaker or combination. It is not even necessary that one be Aegisthus; a servant or Clytemnestra would serve as well. 871 could be considered suited to a person within the house, although it is a matter of concern to the Chorus since it has admitted doubt in the preceding stanza. At least one cry must belong to someone within the house and the remainder rightly belongs to the Chorus.

In Lattimore's translation lines 869 - 70 are passed over with the stage direction, "A cry is heard within the house" (p. 123). This avoids the embarrasing paucity of English words of lamentation to translate the Greek, side-steps the question of speaker change and emphasizes how truly important the interjection is. It is thus much to be preferred.

4. Op. Cit., p. 43. Diehl does not mention this passage at any point. Nakamura omits all reference to Prometheus:

> It must be remarked here that Prometheus, of which the parados is in commos form, is left out of account in my present paper, because I hesitate to attribute the play to Aeschylus from stylistic considerations. (p. 24, fn.2)

The possibility that Prometheus might be the work of Aeschylus dictates its inclusion here. Certainly in regard to the treatment and uses of kommoi there are far greater differences in those of Eumenides than those of Prometheus, and it does not seem to the present author that kommatic usage can be added to the stylistic criteria which are used to eliminate Prometheus from the Aeschylean corpus.

5. It is of interest to note that the choral section divides naturally into two sections of four lines each, although they are uneven metrically. Thus we have an arithmetic progression based on increments of five lines, i.e. Prometheus 14, Hermes 9, Chorus 4 and reverse. Barring the possibility of some unknown and arcane symbolism the only reason for this would seem to be to produce a "decressendo - cressendo" effect to draw the play to its close. This might also reflect the tendency of the Chorus to speak in quatrains noted by C.J. Herrington, "A Unique Technical Feature of the Prometheus Bound", CR 77, 1963, pp. 5 - 7, although the metre is different in this case.

6. Cornford, p. 43.

7. This numbering agrees with Nakamura, p. 13. Diehl omits reference to this passage. A case might be made for the inclusion of lines 1021 - 47 since it is choral following an epirrhema from Athena. There is, however, a change in the epirrhemata of 1021 - 31 to iambs and the choral section is of two strophic systems in anapaests. The metre is thus completely different from what has preceded it; the Chorus is a secondary one, not the Chorus of Eumenides, and the epirrhematic structure has been discarded. This last section is thus a separate entity and, since we have already excluded Sup. 407 - 54 on similar grounds, we regard the final lines of Eumenides as a valedictory and exodus of non-kommatic form.

8. Cornford, p. 43.

9. No adequate translation of ξυνοικία exists. The Greek is literally "dwelling-together", and the implications are those of civilization and the social state. It is in this sense that "community" has been used.

10. ἀτιμία as a legal term means the loss of civil rights and is thus somewhat ironic. Vide infra, fn. 14.

11. καὶ τῷ κτανόντι ποῦ τὸ τέρμα τῆς φυγῆς;
and for the killer where is the end of flight? (422)

12. Athena teaches that reconciliation is possible through the properly ordered polis in which the conscience of the individual is guided by the judgment and wisdom of the court.

Reconciliation of the guilty individual is possible not because he is deemed "innocent" - that is furthest from the decision handed down by Athena and the Areopagus - but because he is, if noble and capable of rational understanding, worthy of being accepted in the city. The polis ... has learned the only way to deal with wrongdoing is to educate for nobility and teach the nature of human destiny.

Richard Kuhns, The House, The City and The Judge, Indianapolis, Bobbs-Merrill (1962), pp. 141 - 2.

13. Her speech in 470ff. indicates that she sees both sides of the issue. Her impartiality is further shown by her refusal to judge the case herself although it is entrusted to her as Goddess of Wisdom by both parties. Instead she establishes a tribunal of citizens, thus emphasizing the divine ordinance of such bodies. From this point two possibilities arise:

1. Athena is herself one of the jurors, as advocated by Kitto, Op. Cit., p. 88 and by M. Gagarin, "The Vote of Athena", AJPh. XCVI (1975), pp. 121 - 27. In this case we must see the tied vote as indicative of what today would be called a hung jury. The result would be, as stated in 741, that Orestes is to be judged "acquited" which is the legal sense of νικᾷ, rather than to have "won".

2. Athena is not one of the jurors and either the tie goes to the defendant as before, or Athena casts the deciding vote in his favour. If the latter is the case, we should not be too hasty in blaming Athena; certainly she has a vested interest in the case, as does Zeus himself. The attempt at impartiality has been made and if Athena is forced to vote, we cannot wonder that she votes on the side of her father.

In any event the tie indicates that there is right and wrong on both sides. Nor are we to regard the decision as a victory for one and a defeat for the other. As Athena states:

οὐ γὰρ νενίκησθ' ἀλλ' ἰσόψηφος δίκη
ἐξῆλθ' ἀληθῶς οὐκ ἀτιμίᾳ σέθεν.
For you have not been defeated, rather the verdict truly came out as an equal vote, not as dishonour for you. (796)

14. "Metic" need not be pejorative in connotation. The original sense was probably less negative than it later became, but even if the connotation can be supressed there remains the fact that it involved the legal deprivation of rights. Aeschylus may not be using the term in any sense but that of derivation. The Eumenides themselves seem to exult in the title, using μετοικία in line 1018 in a sense identical to this.

15. Aeschylus II, University of Chicago Press, 1956, p. 132.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSIONS

The subject matter of this work and the form itself have derived from the definition in the Poetics of Aristotle. We have paid little attention to the full definition of the term kommos to this point. The concern has been more with the form implied in Aristotle's definition, that is, with lyric compositions which are "common to the chorus and the actor." This then, has been the sole criterion for selecting the passages studied. This has seemed a logical approach since it reflects the vagaries of later scholarship. Only in this way has it been possible to include all those passages which might pertain to the use Aeschylus made of what is in itself a genre of dramatic poetry.

We shall delay for some time longer a return to the other part of the definition of kommos, that it is a threnody. Instead a review of the use and style of these bipartite compositions of Aeschylus will be undertaken to discern the similarities and characteristics which join these compositions as a cohesive unit.

AESCHYLUS' USE OF THE KOMMOS

Nakamura frequently uses the word "grandiose" in relation to the kommos of Aeschylus[1]. Certainly, Aeschylus was a very "theatrical" dramatist. There is sufficient evidence of his use of stage effects, panoply, pageantry and even the bizarre not to be surprised by a tendency towards grandeur in any type of composition within his dramas. This is particularly true when we consider the nature of the kommos.

The kommos is an interaction between an actor and the chorus in

which at least one party sings a lyric. This is a situation which has a natural potential for resulting in an elevated and uncommon form of expression. The institution of the chorus itself is something that is foreign to our perception of reality and can be very difficult to handle dramatically. As a result, this interaction can become highly theatrical or "grandiose". Indeed, to those to whom the chorus is an unusual convention, a sense of elevation and grandeur, which is not inherent in the specific passage, may be apparent. It would, therefore, be wrong to assume that the kommos tends towards grandiose expression without considering the dramatic necessity for this to occur in any particular instance.

Simply stated, a kommos may occur at any point in the drama in which there is a natural interaction between the chorus and the actor. The lyricism will have its own rationale and make its own contribution to the drama or the dramatic effect. If the dramatist is skillful, it may be expected that something is achieved by use of the kommos which would not otherwise be effected. We would be justified in demanding that he do more than merely titilate our aural and visual faculties, however much pleasure we may derive from this. All this is even more to the point since it has been observed that in many cases [2] the kommos does not contribute to the advancement of the plot and that the kommos seems to be an instant isolated from the action of the play. In these cases we are not disappointed by Aeschylus. He does not yield to mere effect, which would be well within the potential of the form. The effects remain, but within this framework he develops character [3], provides foreshadowing [4], or effects a transition from one part of the play or one speaker to another [5]. These passages

always relate to the theme and underscore it and expose the moods of the participants.

A "grander" type of kommos occurs at points of climax and anti-climax. This is particularly necessary in those plays in which the Chorus figures as pro- or antagonist. Thus in Suppliants, Persae and Septem the climax occurs in a kommos or kommos structure. The interplay, upon which 'drama' depends, naturally finds its height of intensity at a point of interaction between the Chorus and an actor in Old Tragedy.

There remain two uses of the kommos which most closely approach Nakamura's conception of a "grandiose... scene" [6]. In the use of the kommos as a final scene (and with this we should include the remarkable parodos of Prometheus) and in the funereal laments the visual and lyrical elements combine to produce an exceptional and theatrical display. These two uses intersect in Persae and Septem. If anywhere, the spectacular is evident in these cases. But we cannot agree that there is a "grandiose ... scene for its own sake". The denouement is of utmost importance in resolving and expanding upon the theme, as is most readily seen in the conclusion to Eumenides. That the conclusion of a trilogy, and there are two final plays from trilogies in Eumenides and Septem, should be of an elaborate and theatrical nature is not remarkable. The great scope and format of the trilogy, its elaborately worked out plot and the grandeur of its theme almost demand an ending which is on a par with what has preceded it. The final impression is the lasting impression and we must be left satisfied that the theme has been fully articulated. Our interest and attention are heightened by this display of visual

and lyric pyrotechnics. Yet in the midst of this "grandiose" finale Aeschylus never lets us lose sight of the theme. At the very end of the trilogy (or play in the case of Persae) our attention is re-focused on the essential doctrine which has given rise to the dramatic performance.

It is in the "Totenklage", the funeral lament, that "we have... a direct reminiscence of a ritual performance for the dead" [7]. We shall have more to say about the effect of this upon the history of drama shortly. What is important at this point is the use which Aeschylus makes of this ritualistic scene. In general he intertwines thematic concepts for elucidation of his dramatic intent. Death is very often the manifestation of the results or causes of the religious idea which underlies the theme. Xerxes pays with the lives of his men for his own rashness and hybris, Agamemnon and Eteocles for their own voluntary continuance of the chain of slaughter and death and Cassandra for her rejection of Apollo. Thus in the laments for these characters is seen the working of the cosmic laws and the results of their human failings. These laments are thus far removed from the ritual recounted in Homer at the end of Iliad XXIV, for these dirges emphasize the tragedy not just of death itself, but of all the forces which have lead to death.

In addition to the thematic intent there is the drama that Aeschylus introduces to these dirges. Thus Cassandra, alone and friendless, laments the death which she alone can foresee, the death which will be unmourned and unavenged but will bring to an end the sufferings of Troy. So too Clytemnestra contrasts her exultation at the death of Agamemnon with the Chorus' grief. By his dramatic

artistry and characterization, Aeschylus has elevated the ritual lament.

THE STYLE OF THE AESCHYLEAN KOMMOS

The present study has shown no discernable tendency in Aeschylus towards an astrophic form of kommos. Of the three compositions mentioned which seem to be astrophic, two [8] are not in any way kommatic while the third [9] preserves the form of the strophe although not the intent, with its exact literal responsion. The astrophic kommos of which Nakamura speaks [10] would seem, then, to be a peculiarity of Euripides. The form may not have been unknown to Aeschylus, but it was not one which he found occasion to use.

The Aeschylean kommos is a cohesive unit depending on metre and thought which separates it from the surrounding sections of the drama. The metres preceding and succeeding it will generally be different from those employed in the kommos. A decision about the lineation of a kommos will thus tend to be somewhat arbitrary and must therefore be based on the metres and intent of the surrounding passages. Useful guidelines will be such factors as the beginning of iambic trimeter stichomythia, the presence of a choral ode, a chang of metre or mood, or the introduction of a new character.

Aeschylus seems to have preferred the epirrhematic form in his kommoi, and within these the iambic trimeter was used in epirrhemata in eighty per cent of the instances. Conversely, with the exception of Persae 694 - 711, all non-dirge kommoi are constructed with epirrhemata. The anapaest was used as epirrhemata in Prometheus 128ff. and Eumenides 916ff. In these cases the metre is probably meant to indicate the choral movement of the parodos and exodus, although

in both cases the marching rhythm falls to the actor. In any case the anapaest associated itself with choral movement into and out of the orchestra.

With regard to the lyric metres of the Aeschylean kommos the following may be concluded with some certainty. In the "Totenklagen", or dirges, a mixture of metres is preferred. This probably allows the poet greater freedom of expression and may realistically reflect the impromptu nature of such songs as might have been sung in a non-dramatic situation. In other cases of intense negative emotion dochmiacs are most commonly employed and it would seem that this metre must have automatically conveyed this emotion to the audience. The minor Ionics of Persae 694ff. probably intensify the foreign flavour of the scene as might the use of the lyric iambs of 256ff., although in the latter case there is probably also an element of simple solemnity. It would be of interest to have a more certain dating for Prometheus since the aeolo-choriambic is "more common in comedy and in Aeschylus and earlier Sophocles than in later fifth-century tragedy" [11]. If the date of Prometheus is later there might be the deliberate use of a metre associated with comedy which would heighten the bizarre nature of the scene. Certainly, from the limited number of metres employed in the non-dirge kommoi, we are justified in assuming that the metre is intended to reflect the prevailing mood or to increase the dramatic effect. By extension we can be reasonably certain that the same is true of the dirges, although the effect of the metres is lost to the modern ear.

THE KOMMOS AS A GENRE

In order to attempt to resolve the discrepanci[illegible]on provided by modern scholarship it would be worthwhile to review that scholarship and to determine what facts can be extracted regarding the kommos as a distinct literary genre. From this, we believe, a history of the form and an hypothesis about Aristotle's definition can be ascertained.

Aristotle, writing about a century after the death of Aeschylus, offered the term "kommos" to describe bipartite threnodies involving the Chorus. He recognized their difference from the other types of lyric in the word ἴδια. What he meant by the word θρῆνος, however, is unknown. The general assumption is that he intended an identification with "dirge" or "funeral lament" which was common in Herodotus. This need not be the case since a wider meaning of more general types of lamentation is attested in Aeschylus [12]. In the absence of other testimony from Aristotle himself it is erroneous to assume that the more limited definition is necessarily correct.

It is the more surprising that such a restrictive definition be imposed on Aristotle by those same scholars who readily point out that

> The general assumption in the Poetics is the theatre as it was in the middle of the Fourth Century. 13

It is a commonplace of scholarship that the Poetics is based on later drama, perhaps even later than those plays which we now possess. It is fair to assume that Aristotle's view of drama would be coloured by those plays with which he was familiar. Thus his conclusions would necessarily be based on the dramatic practice current at the time of his study or at the time of the dramatist in whom he was most interested.

This point is important since there is a noticeable change in the use and function of the bipartite lyric between Aeschylus and Euripides.

Aeschylus never set out to write a kommos. The use of that word as a technical term is apparently unknown before Aristotle. Aeschylus was a dramatist, not a theoretician, so his interest in terminology would probably have been minimal. Aeschylus set out to compose drama. He was confronted with certain ritual conditions (such as the presence of a chorus) which had to be met dramatically. Thus the interaction between the Chorus and the actor, which was essential to Greek drama, would occasionally result in a composition of intense lyrical exchange. In short he met the dramatic necessity of the situation with a lyrical form which was suitable to the conventions of the stage and which he made useful to his dramatic purpose.

Some time after Aristotle, Eukleides substituted the term τὸ ἀμοιβαῖον for "kommos", probably recognizing the difficulty of applying that derivative to all bipartite lyrics. In a way this is more equitable to Aeschylus, the majority of whose lyric interchanges are actually "responsions". Yet by strict application it would leave out those which are true dirges since, as has been noted above, the responsive element is most lacking in Aeschylean "Totenklagen". We would also have to include stichomythia although these lack the lyric aspect of Aristotle's definition.

Since the nineteenth century, scholarship has generally assumed that

> kommoi were originally used purely for lamentations shared by Chorus and actors 14

and because the interaction of Chorus and actor is essential to Greek drama,

> 'scholars ... found support for theories which hold not only that the 'Kommos' is the original kernel of Tragedy, ... but [also] that the whole performance was originally a lamentation over a dead god or hero. 15

These theories would have their shortcomings since it would be difficult to account for such other elements in the drama as the agon, mimesis and dialect. The unsupperable objection is that noted by Cornford:

> If the view were true, we ought to find in the earliest tragedies amoebaean composition solely or chiefly used for Threnoi, in the later tragedies more such compositions expressing other emotions and fewer of them restricted to Threnoi .... the actual case is exactly the reverse. 16

It seems, then, that the assumption and the theory are wrong. Kommoi cannot have been the kernel of tragedy and were not originally used solely for lamentations.

We are left with two facts about the evolution of the kommos:

1. The bipartite, or amoebaean or kommatic form existed and was an essential element of the drama, even at an early stage,

2. The form became increasingly limited to dirges or "Totenklagen".

There is, then, the difficulty of reconciling these facts with a scheme of the evolution of the drama.

It is profitable to consider a parallel development as an explanation of this phenomenon. The evolution of drama itself supplies the explanation of the development of the kommos rather than the reverse.

The parallel development of which we speak is noted by Adrados:

> In the ultimate phase, Theatre comes to give its choruses an almost neuter or neutral colour, becoming a mere lyrical underlining, mythical sometimes, of the action, and a stage expedient for isolating some scenes from others. This frequently happens in Euripides, as is well known. 17

From these three facts we can postulate the evoltion of the kommos in its Aristotelian sense.

Whatever the origins of drama itself, the bipartite structure originated naturally the moment an actor became an entity separate from the chorus. In this sense alone, that is, in being a dramatic interchange between actor and chorus, the kommos may be considered to be a kernel of drama since this interchange is essential to drama. The results of this study indicate that even at an early stage in the development of tragedy these compositions were not limited to funereal laments. Thus this basic concept of interchange, which began with no specific theme or mood, has equal application to the origins of all types of Greek Drama, and not tragedy alone. The interchange did not depend on tragic elements but on the interaction of actor and chorus within a lyrical framework. It is therefore wrong to postulate, solely from the existance of kommoi, that tragedy derived from a lament over the dead.

The form was nurtured and expanded and its potential fully explored, until, in Aeschylus, its peak of development was reached. As long as the ritual necessity for the Chorus existed, and dramatists were both capable of dealing with it effectively and inclined to do so, the Chorus, and as a result the "kommos", remained viable elements. At some time during the career of Aeschylus a change ocurred. It was realized that a more realistic drama could exist independent of ritual.

One immediate problem arose as drama became more humanistic and less ritualistic: what to do with the chorus. It is seemingly contrary to reality that a large group of people should think and

behave in a completely identical fashion. It seems that the poet was then left with three possibilities. He could discard the Chorus completely. However, while the action had become less ritualistic, the form and the festival occasions for the presentation of drama had not, and so the Chorus remained for a time. He could confine the Chorus to an extraneous use, filling in episodes, as is often suggested of Euripides [18]. He could use the Chorus in a somewhat traditional fashion to comment on the action and restrict its use dramatically to cases where the Chorus could be expected to have similar thoughts and a shared interest and to behave as a unit. One primary occasion in which this set of conditions would have convened and perhaps the most natural one, given the tragic situation, would have been in laments over the dead.

The two latter possibilities seem to have gained currency simultaneously: the former when the Chorus functioned as an independent unit and the latter when it interacted with the actors. That the more "naturalistic" drama gained popularity rather quickly is confirmed by the immense popularity enjoyed by Euripides. As a result this newer type of drama became the living force and by the time of Aristotle "kommoi" were concerned primarily, if not exclusively, with laments over the dead.

Our study, therefore, would seem to provide reinforcement of the belief that the Poetics is indeed concerned with the state of drama as it existed at a period later than that of Aeschylus, that is, the late fifth century at the earliest. We believe that we have shown sufficient similarities in Aeschylus' use of the kommos to refute the possible objection that the plays which survive (probably one-tenth of his output)

may not provide a representative sampling. The limitation imposed by such a small selection, if our theory of the evolution of the kommos is correct, is that there should be more non-dirge kommoi in the earlier plays than in the later. A statistical analysis of the surviving plays of Aeschylus, however, does not support this. Persae, a play concerned with death on a massive scale, contains forty per cent of the remaining dirges while Prometheus, which is not at all concerned with death, contains none. We suggest that while the sample is indeed too small to admit such an analysis within the works of a particular dramatist, a comparison of the dramatists will support the theory.

The vast majority of the bipartite compositions of Aeschylus do not conform to the Aristotelian definition of kommos if we are to interpret "threnos" as dirge or "Totenklage". This interpretation is, however, more restrictive than can be supported by lexicography. The interpretation ought to be discarded and the term kommos properly applied to all those lyrics which are a species of lamentation shared proportionately by the actors and the Chorus. This extension of the term "threnos" preserves fidelity to Aristotle's definition. Of those lyrics which are not laments but which conform to the style and structure of the kommos, we might say that they are of "kommatic form" and we would do well to devote our energies to attempting to understand why and how effectively such a form is used in a manner contrary to expectation. It is incorrect to require that a technical term, devised and applied after the fact meet all variations which are possible in an art form unless that form is consciously and faithfully copied. So it is with the kommos. The form of interchange

arose from a dramatic convention and was found to fulfill certain conditions at certain points in the history of drama. As the history progressed and those conventions changed, the conditions which the form fulfilled also changed. It was only when the Chorus itself became a stylized convention that the kommos [19] became stylized and consciously imitated.

Footnotes

1. pp. 12 - 13, "grandeur" p. 14.

2. Sept. 203ff., 686ff.; Sup. 734ff., 843ff.; Per. 694ff.; Choe. 306ff.

3. Sept. 203ff.; Sup. 734ff.

4. Sept. 203ff., 686ff; Eum. 777ff.; Per. 256ff.

5. Sept. 203ff.; Per. 256ff., 694ff.

6. P. 13.

7. Nakamura, p. 12, not in this context.

8. Pro. 1040 - 93, which is not truly lyric, and Choe. 869 - 74, which is neither κοινὸς χοροῦ (common to the chorus) nor lyric.

9. Eum. 777ff.

10. pp. 19ff.

11. Dale, p. 131.

12. Aga. 991, 1322; Pro. 388.

13. Bywater, p. 206 (quoted by Cornford, p. 41). See also Taplin, p. 475.

14. D.J. Conacher, "Interaction Between Chorus and Characters in the Oresteia", AJPh. 95 (1974), p. 323.

15. Cornford, pp. 41 - 41; see also Adrados, pp. 2ff.

16. Cornford, p. 42. Although we do argue that in relation to Aristotle's definition the term "threnos" should be extended to include a more general type of lament than the dirge, this observation is still accurate and to the point, since Cornford's limitation of "threnos" ensures that his analysis of the kommos in Euripides is correct.

17. P. 130.

18. This is perhaps an unfair judgement, although a commonplace of criticism. The potential of such use presented the extreme danger that in the hands of less skilled dramatists the Chorus would eventually have to be discarded since its viability had been utterly compromised.

19. (or whatever it might have been called had Aristotle been more familiar with, or more interested in, the dramas of Aeschylus)

Bibliography

A. Primary Sources

Aeschylus. Prometheus Bound. Edited by J. Davies. London, 1879.

_____. Agamemnon. Edited by J.D. Denniston and D. Page. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957.

_____. Agamemnon. 3 Vols. Edited with a commentary by Eduard Fraenkel. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1950.

_____. Zeven Tegen Thebe. Edited by P. Groeneboom. Amsterdam: 1966.

_____. Prometheus Bound. Edited by J.E. Harry. New York: American Book Co., 1905.

_____. The Suppliants. Vol. I. Text with introduction, critical apparatus and translation by H. Friis Johansen. Scholia with introduction and critical apparatus by Ole Smith. Copenhagen: 1970.

_____. Septem Quae Supersunt Tragoedias. Edited by D. Page. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972.

_____. Prometheus Bound. Edited by H. Rackham. Cambridge: University Press, 1957.

_____. Choephoroi. Edited with commentary by A. Sidgwick. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1900.

_____. Septem Contra Thebas. Edited with commentary by A. Sidgwick. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1903.

_____. The Oresteia of Aeschylus. 2 Vols. Edited with a commentary by George Thompson. Amsterdam and Prague: Hakkert, 1966.

_____. The Choephoroi. Edited and with a translation and notes by T.G. Tucker. Cambridge: University Press, 1901.

_____. Orestie. Edited and with notes by N. Wecklein. Leipzig: Teubner, 1888.

_____. Tragoediae. Edited by U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff. Berlin: 1958.

_____. Aeschylus I, Oresteia. Translated and with an introduction by Richard Lattimore. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953.

_____. Aeschylus II. The Suppliant Maidens and The Persians. Translated and with introductions by Seth G. Benardete. Seven Against Thebes and Prometheus Bound. Translated and with introductions by David Grene. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956.

Aristophanes. Comoediae. Edited by F.W. Hall and W.M. Geldart. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978.

Aristotle. Aristotle on the Art of Poetry. Edited by Ingram Bywater. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1909.

_____. Poetics. Edited by Gerald F. Else. Ann Arbor: University of Michagan Press, 1967.

_____. Poetics, A Translation and Commentary for Students of Literature. Edited by Leon Golden and O.B. Harrison Jr. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1968.

_____. Poetics. Edited with an introduction, commentary and appendices by D.W. Lucas. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968.

Homer. The Iliad. Translated by E.V. Rieu. Harrmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1956.

Oxford Classical Dictionary, The. Edited by M. Cary et alii. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968.

Liddell, H.G. and Scott. An Intermediate Greek - English Lexicon. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964.

Rose, H.J. A Commentary on the Surviving Plays of Aeschylus. 2 Vols. Amsterdam: N.V. Noord-Hollandsche Uitgevers Maatschappij, 1957.

B. Secondary Sources

Adrados, Francisco R. Festival, Comedy and Tragedy. The Greek Origins of Theatre. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1975.

Agnes, Sr. M. "The Cassandra Episode in the Agamemnon", C.B. XI (1934 - 1935), 20 - 21.

Anderson, Florence M.B. "The Metrical Arrangement of the Kommos in the Agamemnon of Aeschylus", AJPh. 45 (1924). 70 - 71.

Arnott, Peter D. An Introduction to the Greek Theatre. London: Macmillan and Co., 1959.

Beck, Robert Holmes. Aeschylus: Playwright Educator. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1975.

Blass, F. "On the ΚΟΜΜΟΣ in the Choephoroi", Ha. XIII (1905), 268 - 277.

Boittin, Jean-Francois. "Le Nom et le Drame: Aspects de la fonction du choeur dans l' Agamemnon d' Eschyle", Ecriture et Theorie Poetiques: Lectures d' Homere, Eschyle, Platon Aristotle. Paris: Presses de l' Ecole Superieure, 1976. 57 - 72.

Brown, A.L. "Eteocles and the Chorus in the Seven Against Thebes", Phoenix XXI (1977). 300 - 318.

Byl, S. "Lamentations sur la vieillesse dans la tragedie grecque", Hommages a C. Preaux: Le mond grec: Penses, Litterature, histoire, documents. Edited by J. Binden and G. Cambier Universitaire libre de Bruxelles, Faculte de Philos. et Lettres, LXII Bruxelles, Ed. de l' Univ., 1975. 130 - 139.

Canavan, J.P. Studies in the Staging of Aeschylean Tragedy. Columbia University, 1972. (Ph. D. Dissertation).

Conacher, D.J. "Interaction Between Chorus and Characters in the Oresteia", AJPh. 95, 4. 1974. 323 - 343.

Cornford, F.M. "The So-called Kommos in Greek Tragedy", CR. March 1913. 41 - 45.

Dale, A.M. The Lyric Metres of Greek Drama. Cambridge: University Press, 1968.

Davison, J.A. "The Date of the Promethea", TAPA LXXX (1949). 66 - 93.

Diehl. "κομμοί", RE. xi. 1195 - 1207.

Dindorf, W. Lexicon Aeschyleum. Leipzig: B.G. Teubner, 1876.

Gagarin, M. "The Vote of Athena", AJPh. XCVI (1975). 121 - 127.

Greenhalgh, P.A.L. "Cassandra and the Chorus of the Agamemnon", Rivista di Studi Classici XVII (1969). 253 - 258.

Griffith, Mark. The Authenticity of 'Prometheus Bound'. Cambridge Classical Studies: Cambridge University Press, 1977.

Guastalla, R. "Le Kommos des Choephoroe", Melanges Desrousseaux. Paris, 1937. 187 - 198.

Haigh, A.E. The Attic Theatre. Third edition revised by Pickard-Cambridge. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907.

Hammond, N.G.L. "Personal Freedom and its Limitations in the Oresteia". JHS.LXXXV (1965). 42 - 55.

Headlam, Walter. "The Last Scene of the Eumenides", JHS. 26 (1906). 268 - 277.

Herrington, C.J. "A Unique Technical Feature of the Prometheus Bound", CR. 77 (1963). 5 - 7.

Herrington, C.J. "Some Evidence for a Late Dating of the Prometheus Vinctus". CR. XIV (1964). 239 - 240.

Ireland, S. "Dramatic Structure in the Persae and Prometheus of Aeschylus", G&R. 20 (1973). 162 - 168.

Italie. Index Aeschylus. Leiden: E.J. Brill. 1964.

Kitto, H.D.F. Greek Tragedy, A Literary Study. London: Methuen & Co., 1966 (as a University Paperback).

Knox, B.M.W. "Aeschylus and the Third Actor". AJPh. XCIII (1972). 104 - 124.

Koniaris, George L. "An Obscene Word in Aeschylus", AJPh. CI (1980). 42 - 44.

Kuhns, Richard. The House, The City and The Judge. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1962.

Lawson, J.C. "The Evocation of Darius", CQ. 1934. 79 - 89.

Leahy, D.M. "The Role of Cassandra in [illegible]resteia of Aeschylus", Bulletin of the John Ryland[illegible]brary 52 (1969). 144 - 177.

Lebeck, Anne. The Oresteia: A Study in Language and Structure. Washington Center for Hellenic Studies, 1971.

Lesky, Albin. Der Kommos der Choephoroe. Vienna: Pichler Tempsky, 1943.

_____. Greek Tragedy. Translated by H.A. Frankfort. London: Benn Ltd., 1965.

_____. "Decision and Responsibility in the Tragedy of Aeschylus", JHS. 86 (1966). 78 - 85.

Lloyd-Jones, H. "The End of the Seven Against Thebes", CQ. n.s. 9 (1959). 80 - 115.

Moritz, Helen F. "Refrain in Aeschylus: Literary Adaptation of Traditional Form", CPh. 74 (1979). 187 - 213.

Murray, Gilbert. Aeschylus, The Creator of Tragedy. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940.

Nakamura, Zenya. "The Kommos in and before Euripides", Annuario Istituto giapponese di cultura I (1963 - 64). 11 - 25.

Orwin, C. "Feminine Justice. The End of the Seven Against Thebes", CPh. LXXV (1980). 187 - 196.

Otis, Brooks. Cosmos and Tragedy, An Essay in the Meaning of Aeschylus. Edited with notes and a preface by S.C. Knopff. University of North Carolina Press, 1981.

Rose, H.J. "Ghost Ritual in Aeschylus", HThR. XLIII (1950). 257 - 280.

Rosenmeyer, Thomas G. The Masks of Tragedy. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1963.

_____. The Art of Aeschylus. Berkely: University of California Press, 1982.

Rosenmeyer, Thomas G.; Ostwald, Martin and Halporn, James W. The Meters of Greek and Latin Poetry. New York: Bobbs-Merrill Co. Inc., 1963.

Schadewaldt, Wolfgang. "Der Kommos in Aischylos' Choephoren", Hermes (1932). 312 - 354.

Sider, David. "Stagecraft in the Oresteia", AJPh. 99 (1978). 12 - 27.

Taplin, Oliver. "Aeschylean Silences and Silences in Aeschylus", HSCPh. 76 (1972). 57 - 97.

_____. The Stagecraft of Aeschylus. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977

Tyrrell, Wm. Blake. "An Obscene Word in Aeschylus", AJPh. CI (1980). 44 - 46.

Stoessl, F. "Aeschylus as a Political Thinker", AJPh. 73 (1953). 113 - 139.

Untersteiner, M. "Le Coefore di Eschilo, Il Commos", Dioniso (1949). 171 - 192, 250 - 262.

Valgimigli, M. "La scena di Cassandra nell' Agamemnone", Civilta Moderna I (1929). 561 - 571.

Vellacott, P. "Has Good Prevailed? A Further Study of the Oresteia", HSCPh. 81 (1977). 113 - 122.

Verrall, A.W. "The Conversion of the Furies", PCA. (1906). 26 - 36.